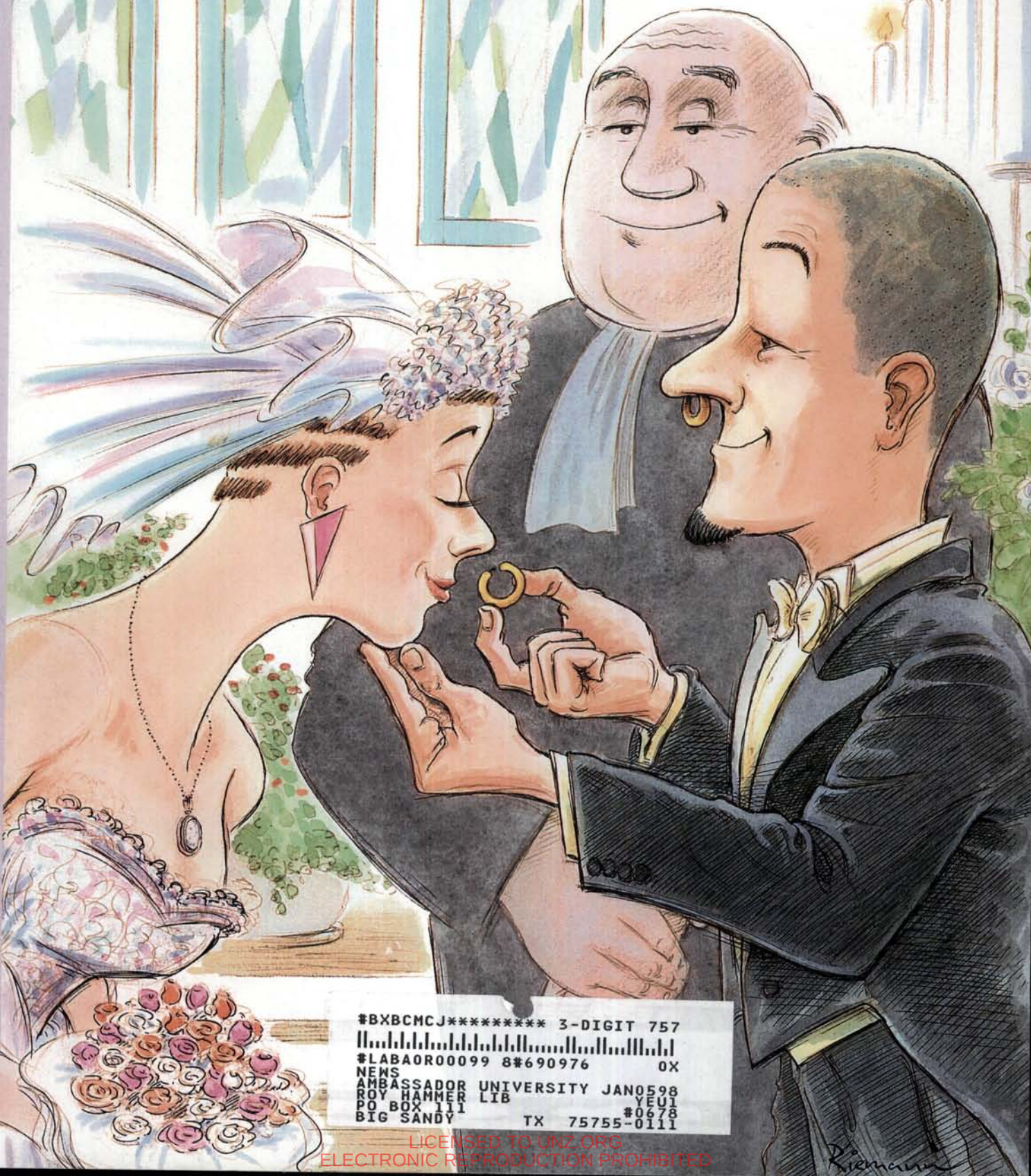


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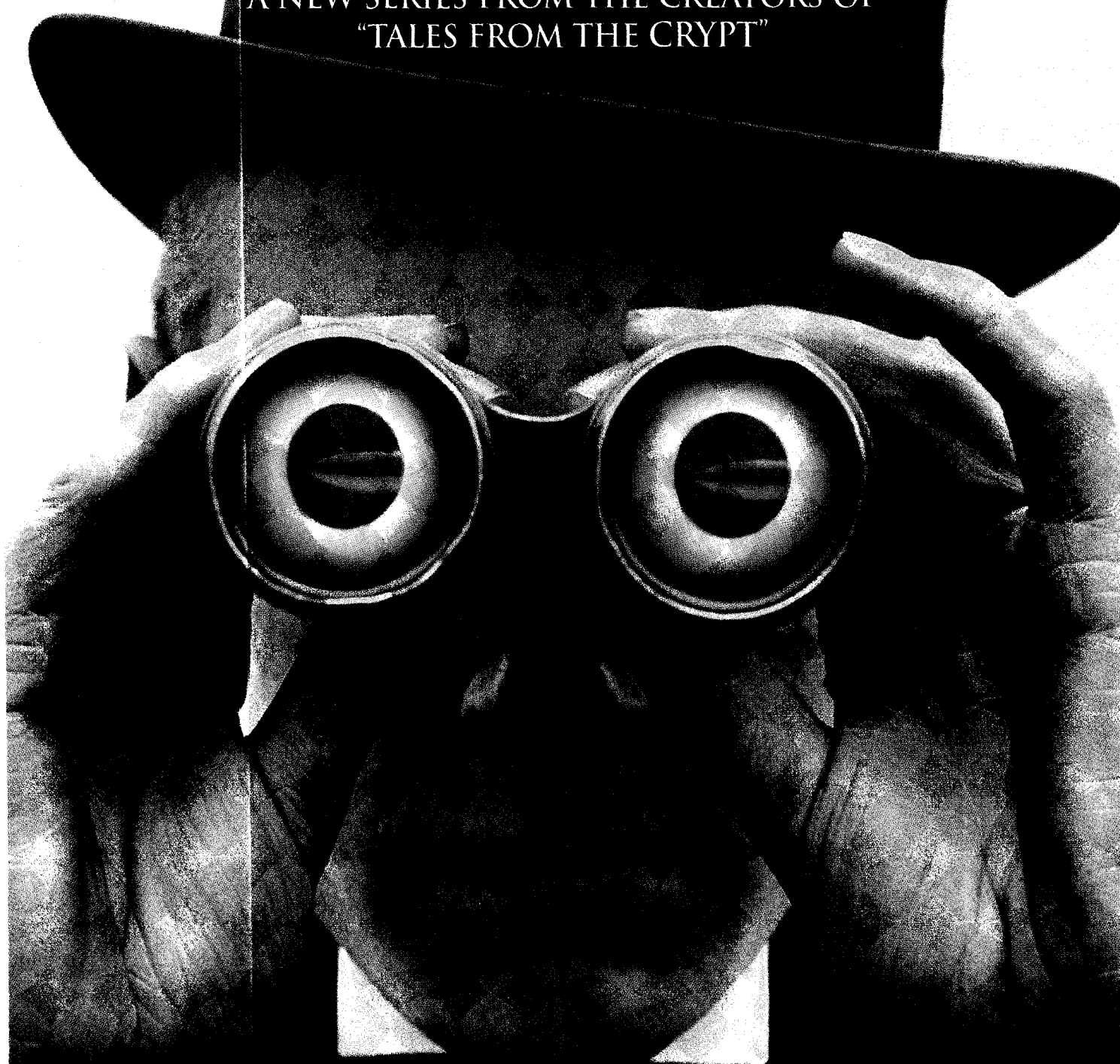
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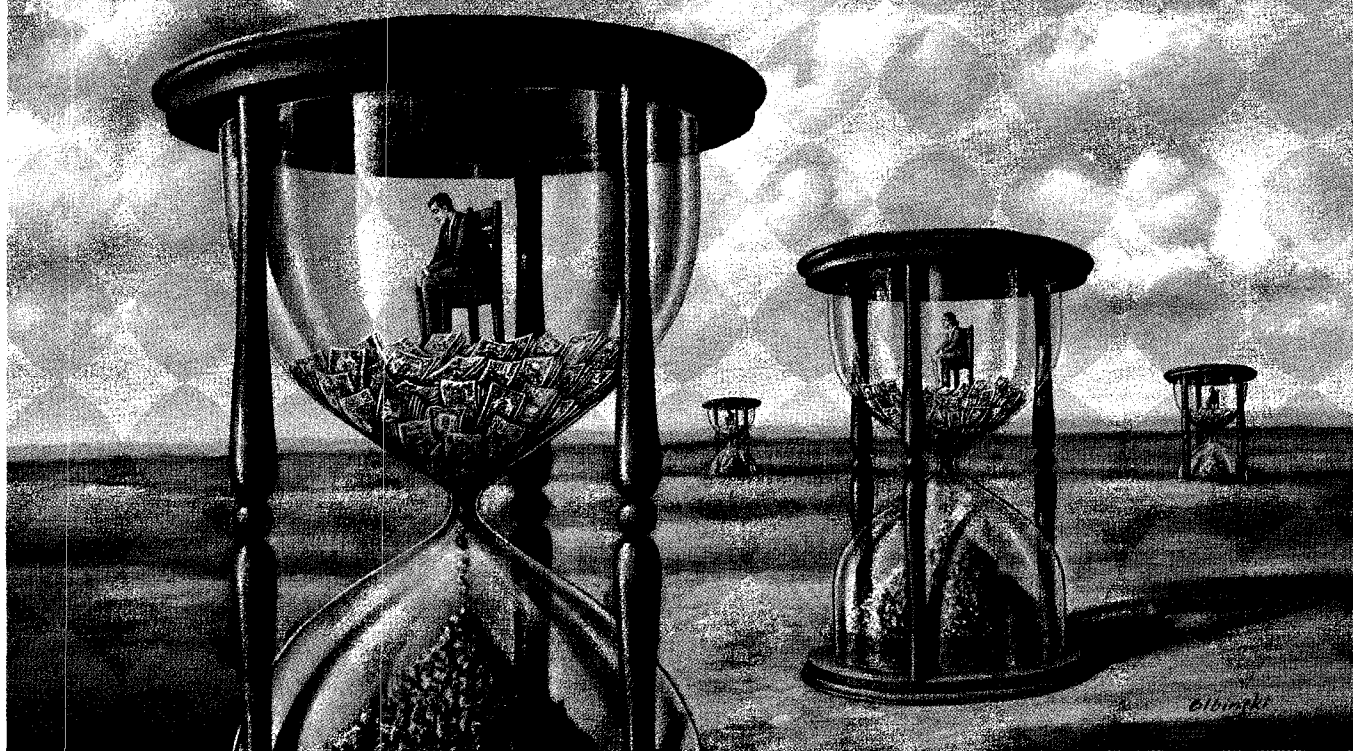
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ANCHOR HANKER

And now, Susan Molinari with the news.

THE revolving door has been picking up speed of late. Last week it was whirling faster than a Kansas tornado. That was Susan Molinari who just whooshed by on her way from Capitol Hill to the news division of the Columbia Broadcasting System, like Dorothy bound for Oz. Molinari's lateral move from political prominence to media stardom was not without recent precedent (does the name George Stephanopoulos ring a bell?), but it was nevertheless startling, because her political career was in such roaringly good shape. Last year, after a fifth straight victory in her Staten Island congressional district, she was made vice-chair of the House Republican Conference. Her keynote address at the 1996 Republican National Convention laid an egg, but a lame Convention speech need not cripple a promising political future. (Does the name Bill Clinton ring a bell?) She's only thirty-nine. It seemed inevitable that she would get around to running for mayor, or governor, or senator, and an eventual spot on a national ticket was far from unthinkable. Now she's chucking it all to read news items and featurette lead-ins off a CBS teleprompter on Saturday mornings.

There has been a certain amount of griping over this, to the effect that the supposed integrity and professionalism of journalism have been compromised. The wall has once again been breached, and so on. The truth is that by moving from the marble halls of Congress to the pastel sets of television news Molinari will raise the gravitas quotient of both institutions. In the House of Representatives, she was unquestionably the cutest, most babelicious of all four hundred and thirty-five members—the Meg Ryan of legislation. On TV, though, where bubbly blondes are either a dime a dozen or a couple of million dollars apiece, depending on whether you're a viewer or an agent, Molinari will temper the stereotype. With her Italian name and tangy outer-borough accent, she is the kind of person that network news departments usually steer clear of as “too ethnic.” She may have looked Hollywood against the gloomy background of lawyers and accountants on Capitol Hill, but in the Ken-and-Barbie context of on-air talent she will be more apt to come across as unintimidatingly, every-womanishly O.K.-looking. And, to the extent that it matters, there is little reason to suppose that her old job (which,

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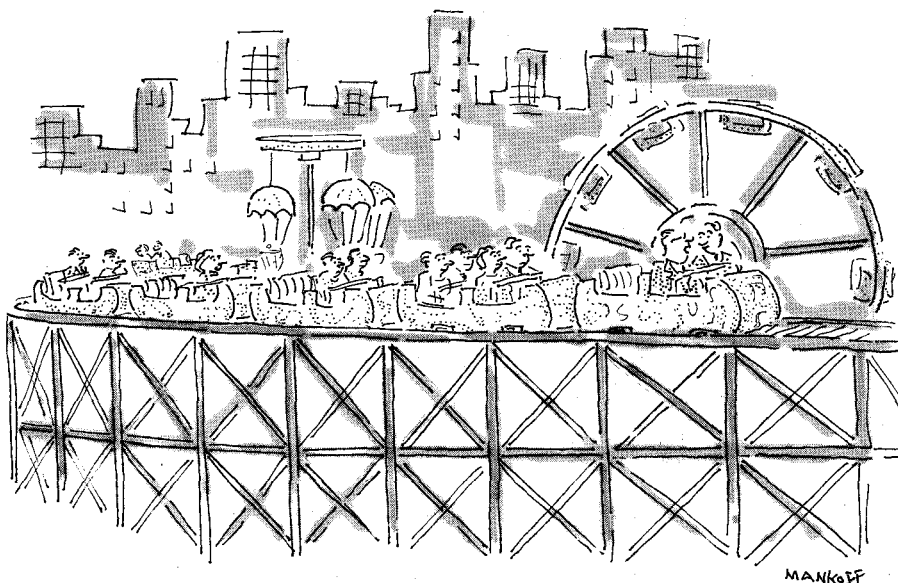
This novel of love and obsession tells the story of an eighteenth-century German Romantic poet and his doomed passion for his "true philosophy"—a plain, simple twelve-year-old girl.

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*"Personally, I liked this roller coaster a lot better before
the Federal Reserve Board got hold of it."*

after all, gave her considerable exposure to matters of public interest) has prepared her for her new one any less efficaciously than the usual career path to anchordom—from local Accu-Weather to the Action News Team to "Good Morning Sandusky" to the big time—might have done.

The door has been revolving in America ever since Benjamin Franklin went from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* to the Continental Congress, and Madison, Hamilton, and Jay began writing op-ed pieces, but through most of our history most of the movement has been toward public office. Horace Greeley tried to go from the *New York Tribune* to the White House, and Warren G. Harding actually got there, via the Marion, Ohio, *Daily Star*. The only nongovernment job John F. Kennedy ever held was as a reporter for the Hearst newspapers. Ronald Reagan's true calling was that of announcer—his detour into acting was a fluke—and it was really his post-movie careers as a TV host and then as a radio broadcaster that lifted him to political Olympus.

Now the traffic is moving in the other direction. At what Washingtonians call the staff level, a modest stint of political coatholding has long been the ticket to pundit heaven, as the careers of Pat Buchanan, Tim Russert, Mary Matalin, Christopher Matthews,

and dozens of others have demonstrated. Increasingly, though, the coats are beating the holders to the goodies. Back in 1972, New Yorkers were still innocent enough to be astonished when Carl Stokes, the just-retired mayor of Cleveland, suddenly turned up as anchorman of the evening news on WNBC-TV. Molinari, by contrast, is part of a stampede: she's not even the first Italian-American New York Congresswoman to go electronic. (That honor belongs to Geraldine Ferraro.) Even as Molinari was preparing to pack up her collection of signed photos, Alan Simpson, the beanpole ex-senator, and Robert B. Reich, the sawed-off ex-Labor Secretary, were already preparing to pack in their Boston talk show, "The Long and the Short of It."

The sources of the trend toward Molinarism—the hegemony of television, the explosive growth of the opinion industry, the degradation of politics, and the repositioning of journalists as celebrities—are, of course, deplorable. But the ideological threat that some have discerned in Molinari's job switch is negligible. The importance of the political views of television news anchors is chronically exaggerated. To be sure, Molinari is a Republican, and a fairly conservative one at that. But, hey—it's not as if she's going to be *writing* the news. —HENDRIK HERTZBERG



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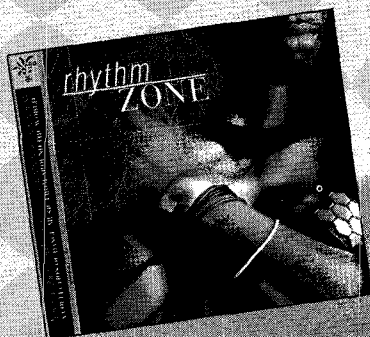
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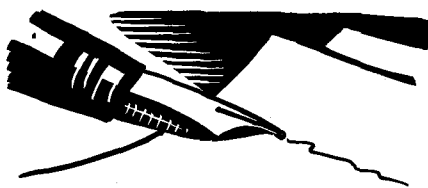
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THE MAIL



LAWYER VS. CLIENT

Jeffrey Toobin aptly cites Robert L. Shapiro's 1993 article "Using the Media to Your Advantage" as an indication of the growing trend toward "aggressive media management" by criminal-defense lawyers ("Spinning Timothy McVeigh," May 19th). The question of whether such strategies ultimately benefit the client or the lawyer is partly answered in that article by Shapiro's own account of his activities. Shapiro refers to his defense of Marlon Brando's son Christian in a murder prosecution. Because Brando's bail was posted "late in the day," Shapiro explains, it looked like he would be unable to keep a commitment to give advance notice of the exact release time to reporters "camped outside the county jail." Shapiro's solution? "Even though... [Christian] could have been released any time that night, I fulfilled my promise and coordinated with the sheriff's department a release at 11:00 A.M." the following day. That is, Shapiro arranged for his own client to spend an extra night in jail. Whether the client agreed that his case was enhanced by this particular method of spin management, Shapiro does not say.

DAVID P. ATKINS
Bridgeport, Conn.

BREAKING A TABOO

Malcolm Gladwell, in his discussion of the disproportionate number of successful athletes of African origin ("The Sports Taboo," May 19th), notes that black physical superiority is often taken to imply intellectual inferiority. Yet that premise is even less reasonable than Gladwell thinks. Consider the reverse. In a businessmen's golf foursome, do we look down on the winner as dumb? Imagine a homely, uncoordinated young woman; do we think how smart she must be? Hardly. Perhaps, therefore, we should expect the increased variability in African genes to

lead to exceptional performance in intellectual as well as athletic endeavors. At one time, American Jews were the majority tenants in Harlem, the leading players in basketball, and the winners, in disproportionate numbers, of scientific awards. African descendants have come to replace Jews in two of these categories. They may well come to dominate the third.

BRUCE I. BLUM
Columbia, Md.

Mr. Gladwell documents how the world's top runners and people who are outstanding in other particular activities are extremes on a Gaussian curve of genetic factors. But he allows for environmental and motivational factors to influence performance as well. Bottom line: racial, sexual, and other superiorities happen—probably for various reasons. And this brings us to the review of Philip Roth's "American Pastoral" ("The Irony and the Ecstasy," May 19th), in which Louis Menand muddies his discomfort with Roth. The problem with Roth is simple: too many of his characters are Gaussian extremes.

PETER D. KING
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

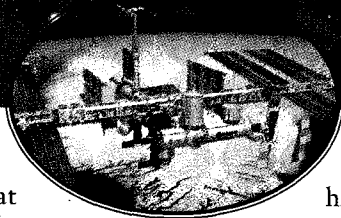
THE TRUMP STORE

Mark Singer's elegantly ironic Profile of Donald Trump (May 19th) reminded me of a time some years ago when, in the course of the Land Use Review Procedure for the Upper West Side development then called Television City, my neighbors and I experienced the Trump style in full bloom. Trump, surrounded by large men in dark suits, made a presentation to the community. In the most condescending manner possible, he urged us to be grateful for a proposed high-density residential and commercial development. I can't forget his phrase "You'll have your boutiques," with its implication that trivia-shopping would satisfy all our needs and concerns about impact on the neighborhood.

ELLINOR R. MITCHELL
New York City

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

AS BEES IN HONEY DROWN—Mark Brokaw directs a comedy by Douglas Carter Beane, about a Manhattan socialite who hires a novelist to write a movie treatment based on her fabulous life story. A Drama Dept. production. Previews begin June 5. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 629-4656.)

BABY ANGER—From Peter Hedges, a new comedy starring Kristen Johnston and John Panikow as a pair of reluctant parents. Michael Mayer is the director. In previews through June 7. Opens June 8 at 7:30. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

CHICAS 2000—In her latest camp comedy, about love in the age of genetic remodelling, Carmelita Tropicana finds herself in the slammer for murdering a man who illegally cloned her buttocks cells. Opens June 6 at 8 and continues through June 21. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

CLEAN—Edwin Sanchez's latest drama about love in a world of violence. In previews through June 8. Opens June 9 at 8. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

DOM JUAN IN MANHATTAN—Molière's man-about-town moves to present-day New York, in the Artaban Theatre Company's version of the comedy. Performed bilingually in French and English. June 6-7 at 8. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE—The final series in this year's six-week marathon of one-acts begins June 4 at 7:30, with plays by Frank D. Gilroy, Craig Lucas, John Ford Noonan, and Vicki Mooney. The marathon continues through June 15. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405.)

HOMEWORK—Kim Coles stars in a one-woman show, which she co-wrote with Charles Randolph-Wright, chronicling the lifelong friendship of three women from Brooklyn. Previews begin June 5. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

SEEKING THE GENESIS—A drama by Kia Corthron, about a single mother trying to raise two sons in an inner-city housing project. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

SMALL LIVES/BIG DREAMS—An expressionistic drama based on five of Chekhov's works. Directed by Anne Bogart. June 5-6 at 8 and June 7 at 2 and 8. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.)

SOMETHING BLUE—A wedding comedy, written and performed by Michaela Murphy and directed by Tim Blake Nelson. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

TELL-TALE—Theatre Couture puts a drag spin on Edgar Allan Poe, in a comic thriller starring Sherry Vine and Jackie Beat and featuring puppetry by Basil Twist. Previews begin June 5. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

WOMEN OF MANHATTAN—John Patrick Shanley's 1986 comedy, about five lonesome people. In previews through June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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5. Opens June 6 at 8 and runs through June 28. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 479-8589.)

YOU DON'T MISS THE WATER—The poet and first-time playwright Cornelius Eady and the cellist and composer Diedre L. Murray have teamed up on a musical about a young black poet coping with his troublesome family. Directed by Evan Yionoulis. Previews begin June 6. (Vineyard's 26th St. Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 353-3874.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ALL MY SONS—A strong production of Arthur Miller's wrenching 1947 drama, about the cost of maintaining the sacred illusions of American life. Both John Cullum and Linda Stephens, as the heads of a Midwestern family, are good as "normal" people who appear to have nothing to hide; Michael Hayden is convincing as their tormented son; and Angie Phillips give a solid and disciplined performance as his girlfriend. Barry Edelstein directed. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/2/97.) (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)



"Small Lives/Big Dreams," a Saratoga International Theatre Institute production.

AN AMERICAN DAUGHTER—A doctor undergoing confirmation hearings for the post of Surgeon General gets run through the wringer by the media, in Wendy Wasserstein's latest, a moving, compelling drama that resonates well beyond the feminist arena. Daniel Sullivan is the director. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Closes June 29.)

ANNIE—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything is possible: no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the New York public. Directed by Martin Char-nin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

AS YOU LIKE IT—The Acting Company swings into town to present the Romanian-born director Liviu Ciulei's staging of Shakespeare's comedy. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200. Closes June 4.)

BARRYMORE—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmixed voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

BERMUDA AVENUE TRIANGLE—In this silly farce, a sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renée Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Bologna and Taylor's script traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the

matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

BOY X MAN—Ed Bullins's semiautobiographical play is an appropriate choice to open the Negro Ensemble Company's thirtieth season: through one family's history, it outlines some of the philosophies and social stresses that created the atmosphere in which the company was founded. The play has some lengthy stretches of exposition, but it's funny and instructive once it settles into the tale of Brenda, a self-described "new Negro woman" of the thirties, and Will, a family man whose pride rests on working constantly rather than on changing the world; Johnny Kitt's moving performance as Will gives the play heart. Directed by Clinton Turner Davis. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Closes June 15.)

CANDIDE—Spectacle substitutes for satire in this revival and revision of the 1956 Leonard Bernstein-Lillian Hellman-Richard Wilbur musical, directed by Hal Prince. Ultimately, the production drowns out all personality, with the exceptions of the expert Andrea Martin, who knows a laugh and how to get it, and Arte Johnson, a little comic who is large on charm. Also with Jim Dale, Jason Danieley, and Harolyn Blackwell. (5/19/97) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

CAPITOL STEPS—A political revue performed by a troupe of former Congressional staff members. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. Closes June 29.)

COLLECTED STORIES—Donald Margulies takes on the subject of literary betrayal



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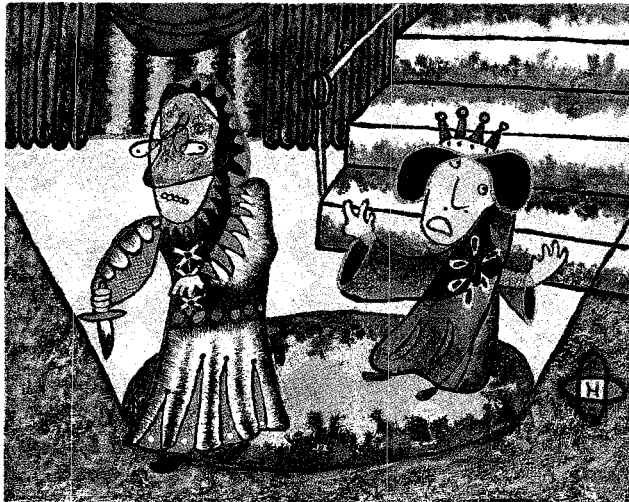
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in his new play, which stars Maria Tucci as a distinguished short-story writer and Debra Messing as a graduate student who absorbs her professor's lessons all too well. The pair are well directed by Lisa Peterson, and Tucci, whose character is a cross between Professor Kingsfield and Margo Channing, is especially good at expressing the various degrees of heartache that inevitably come to all mentors. (6/2/97) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

THE DEVILS—In her 1993 fantasy, "The Swan," playwright Elizabeth Egloff made the inherently unbelievable real and moving. In



this adaptation of Dostoyevsky's novel, she makes the events preceding the Russian Revolution trivial. The play is too long, the plot too idiotic, the characters too poorly drawn, and the lines too farcical for either illumination or satire. There are some funny moments, and the mostly solid cast tries its best, but the piece doesn't really tell us anything about early revolutionaries or about people caught in the gears of a deeply unfair society. Directed, like a Keystone Cops comedy, by Garland Wright. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475. Closes June 8.)

A DOLL'S HOUSE—A thrilling version of Ibsen's play, imported from the West End. Anthony Page's scrupulous, sensitive direction catches all the music and irony in the collusion between Nora (masterfully played by Janet McTeer) and her husband, Torvald (the passionate Owen Teale). (4/14/97) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

DREAM—A train wreck of a tribute to the great lyricist Johnny Mercer, in which only the singer Margaret Whiting and the singing jazz guitarist John Pizzarelli get out alive. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

A DROP IN THE BUCKET—Two widows do Atlantic City, in a dark comedy by Edward Belling. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes June 15.)

FAIRY TALES—A revue about gay life, by Eric Lane Barnes. Directed by Mark Cannistraro. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

THE GIN GAME—Julie Harris and Charles Durning shine in the National Actors Theatre's funny, poignant revival of D. L. Coburn's 1977 play, about two elderly people who discover an antidote to their loneliness in a card game. Charles Nelson Reilly directed. (Lycium, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE—A new play written and directed by Moisés Kaufman. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Mary-Louise Parker) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (David Morse), is a clear-eyed marvel. (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

JEKYLL & HYDE—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel, with

music by Frank Wildhorn and lyrics and a book by Leslie Bricusse. While there is much here to laugh at, the show exerts an undeniable pull, aided by the solid direction of Robin Phillips and the lovely voices of Linda Eder and Christiane Noll. (5/12/97) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

KING OF RATS—David Greenspan heads up the cast of Russian-born playwright Marina Shron's drama, about a family's sudden deterioration. (46 Walker Street Theatre. 560-7387. Closes June 7.)

THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

THE LIFE—This new musical about the oldest profession in Times Square before it became known as the new Times Square (surely you remember all those singing hookers you used to pass on your way to the theatre) and the men who profit from its practitioners is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues,

overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book. The game cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

THE LITTLE FOXES—In Lillian Hellman's cunning dissection of greed and sexual politics, set in the New South in 1900, the Machiavellian Regina Hubbard shakes down her brothers, who are on the brink of a new business venture, for a larger piece of the family pie. Stockard Channing's Regina is a steely, intelligent woman, ravished both by money and by the momentum of the new industrial age. While the rest of the casting in Jack O'Brien's production is uneven, the lineaments of the exciting chicanery and the fierce feminism underneath it come through. (5/19/97) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes June 15.)

LONDON ASSURANCE—As a vain, preening dandy, Brian Bedford serves up so much ham in this production of Dion L. Boucicault's 1841 mistaken-identity farce that you're ready to push the plate away and leave the table long before the meal has ended. The play has been ballyhooed as foreshadowing Wilde, but it's at least twice as annoying as it is witty. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes June 29.)

MEN ON THE VERGE OF A HIS-PANIC BREAKDOWN—Felix A. Pire, who has such fine stage presence that he makes even the costume and set changes interesting, brings a wacky improvisational spirit to his portrayal of six gay Latino immigrants, in a one-man show penned by Guillermo Reyes. Some of the characters seem to be hanging onto their American existence by a thread, but, make no mistake, *gringito*, these are tough, tenacious men: as Federico, a lovable recent arrival from Central America, says, "I'm here to stay. Get used to it." Joseph Megel directed. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 265-1086.)

MERE MORTALS AND OTHERS—Six short plays by David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing." Only two are new, but they are Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and the two actors who play them, Anne O'Sullivan and

Arnie Burton, are perfectly buggy. "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border, and Nancy Opel, woman of a hundred lunatic accents, gives an inspired performance as a *loca* local and as a mad German doctor. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

NOTIONS IN MOTION—Jeremy Dobrish has retooled Pirandello's "Each in His Own Way" as a comedy about a Mafia love scandal. Presented by the Adobe Theatre Company. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 560-7387. Closes June 28.)

STEEL PIER—John Kander and Fred Ebb's new musical takes place at a dance marathon in Atlantic City in 1933: it's a slick Depression fantasy with imagery and ideas that have long been overused in movies and television. (5/12/97) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

STONEWALL JACKSON'S HOUSE—Jonathan Reynolds's comedy hits all its targets—from multiculturalism to the misuses of history—with deadly aim, and the versatile cast is hilarious. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

TAP DOGS—Australia's work-booted tap troupe. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

TITANIC—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden voyage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments (and technical problems), it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter—the enormity of the disaster and its heartbreaking human details—and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Richard Jones directed. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

TO CATCH THE LIGHTNING—A Puerto Rican Traveling Ensemble staging of a new play by Carmen Rivera, about a man losing touch with reality. Performances are in English Wednesdays through Fridays and in Spanish Saturdays and Sundays. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 354-1293. Closes June 30.)

TRANSLATIONS—The Irish playwright Brian Friel's 1981 political and cultural allegory, set in Ballybeg, County Donegal, in 1833. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318. Closes June 22.)

THE WIZARD OF OZ—A would-be extravaganza based on the 1939 film classic which feels stuck on fast-forward: as sixteen scenes whiz by in ninety minutes, most of the movie's magic gets left by the side of the Yellow Brick Road. Still, the cast is pleasant, especially Michael Gruber, who plays the Tin Man, and Judith McCauley, who plays Glinda, the Good Witch. As the Wicked Witch of the West, Roseanne laughs fiendishly and spends a lot of time in the air on a broom. (Madison Square Garden. 307-4111. Closes June 8.)

THE YOUNG MAN FROM ATLANTA—Horton Foote's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, set in Houston in 1950, with powerful performances by Rip Torn and Shirley Knight, as a couple whose only child killed himself six months earlier. The wife won't face the issue of suicide; the husband won't face the issue of homosexuality. The audience gets the point within the first ten minutes and then spends the next two hours waiting for the light to come on in the couple's befogged minds. Robert Falls is the director. (4/14/97) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES**: Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . .

BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK: Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS**: Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . .

CHICAGO: Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS**: Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . .

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DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—June 4 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "The Steadfast Tin Soldier," the premiere of Miriam Mahdavian's "Urban Dances," and "The Concert." . . . June 5 at 8: "Mozartiana," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Agon." . . . June 7 at 2: "Serenade," "Urban Dances," and "The Concert." . . . June 7 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and "The Concert." . . . June 8 at 3: "Mozartiana," "Tarantella," "Kammermusik No. 2," and "Vienna Waltzes." . . . June 10 at 8: "Serenade," "Schoenberg/Wuorinen Variations," and "Vienna Waltzes." (New York State Theatre, 870-5570. Through June 29.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE—June 4 at 2 and 8 and June 5 at 8: "Coppélia." . . . June 6 at 8 and June 7 at 2 and 8: "The Merry Widow." . . . June 9-10 at 8: "Swan Lake." (Metropolitan Opera House, 362-6000. Through July 5.)

PARSONS DANCE COMPANY—For his troupe's tenth-anniversary season, choreographer David Parsons brings three programs, mixing repertory ("Ring Around the Rosie," "Caught," and "Bachiana," among others) and new works ("The Almighty," which is about money, and "Closure"). (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. June 3 at 7, June 4-6 and June 10 at 8, June 7 at 2 and 8, and June 8 at 2 and 7:30. Through June 15.)

"VOLUME 2"—Dance Project and Dance Theatre Workshop join forces to present the Dutch choreographer Beppie Blankert's third full-length production devoted to Charles Ives. For this installment, the eight-member troupe concentrates on the composer's orchestral and piano music, performed by the Relâche Ensemble. (Dance Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. June 5-8 at 8:30.)

MAIA CLAIRE GARRISON—The former Urban Bush Woman and choreographer demonstrates her versatility in her first full-length program, with pieces created for her own company, M'Zawa Dance, as well as for the children's African-dance company Batoto Yetu. In addition, she also takes the stage, in a duet with tapper Ayodele Casel. "I want to show that tap, hip-hop, and African dance all share the same roots," Garrison says. "The hip-hop is in my body, and the African part comes easy, but to translate tap rhythms into modern is a little intricate." She dances barefoot, Casel in tap shoes, and they both translate the rhythms into their respective dance languages. To be danced, she says, "sometimes the rhythms have to be sung." And then spelled: the onomatopoeic title of their duet, "Du Brà Brà Brà Gu Digu Digu," comes from the sounds their feet make. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 650-7100. June 6-7 at 7:30.)

"AZULEJOS, PART II"—Flamenco and Spanish classical dance from Andrea del Conte's Danza España. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. June 4-7 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

MATTHEW SWEET—1991 was the Nebraska-born singer-songwriter's year: a checkered career gelled into "Girlfriend," a stirring pop-rock opus built around his gentle tenor and the white-hot guitar work of Television's Richard Lloyd and the Voidoids' Robert Quine. Stardom was in the air. Sweet turned up in the pages of magazines, modelling clothes with starlets. "Altered Beast" (1993) was a bit of a no-show, but then, two years later, he weighed in with the deceptively titled "100% Fun," wherein he confessed to being "Sick of Myself"—a sentiment at odds with the urge a lot of people felt to listen to the record again and again. Apparently Sweet's career is going to be one of ups and downs. His latest album, "Blue Sky on Mars," is mostly down, but he always manages to churn out at least one power-pop classic. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. June 5 at 8.)

ERASURE—Vince Clarke wrote the synth-pop rule book as a member of such groundbreaking New Wave acts as Depeche Mode and Yaz, but what probably got him where he is today was never underestimating the importance of a living, breathing diva to flesh out those skeletal computerized ditties. Enter Andy Bell, who lacks the barn-burning lungs of Yaz's Alison Moyet but looks better in a tutu. Get ready for love songs, nothing but love songs. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. June 5 at 8.)

"MUSIC IN THE ANCHORAGE"—Creative Time's "Art in the Anchorage" show this year is supplemented by a lineup of bands that range from electronic to experimental to just plain loud. June 5: Sonic Youth, Christian Marclay, Ikue Mori, and the Third Eye Foundation. June 6: Kevin Martin and DJ Vadim. (Cadman Plaza West at Front St., Brooklyn. For information, call 212-206-6674, ext. 252. Doors open at 9.)

DAVE STRYKER QUARTET—On his recent disk, "Blue to the Bone," guitarist Stryker pulls a roots number, basking in the comforting glow of the I-IV-V progression. It's practically impossible for a pop-based player—particularly a rapid-wrist guitarist—not to profit from a long, cool drink at the wellspring of jazz. (Museum of Modern Art Auditorium, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9491. June 6 at 5:30. . . **NOTE:** Later that evening, Stryker brings an expanded lineup into Birdland for the first of two nights.)

TIBETAN FREEDOM CONCERT—Now in its second year, this two-day mini Lollapalooza unites the crème de la crème of modern rock under the honorable banner of a free Tibet. Among the featured bands are (on June 7) A Tribe Called Quest, Foo Fighters, the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Nawang Khechog, Patti Smith, Sonic Youth, and the brilliant Tibetan singer Yungchen Lhamo, and (on June 8) the Beastie Boys, Björk, Blur, De La Soul, Michael Stipe and Mike Mills, Pavement, Rancid, Taj Mahal, Alanis Morissette, and rumored guests U2. (Downing Stadium, Randall's Island. For information, call 800-645-2737. June 7-8. Gates open at 10 A.M.; music starts at noon.)

RINGO STARR AND HIS ALL STARR BAND—A where-are-they-now? convocation featuring the cryogenic talents of Peter Dinklage, Dave Mason, Jack Bruce (Cream), Gary Brooker (Procol Harum), and Simon Kirke (Bad Company). (Jones Beach Theatre, 516-221-1000. June 7 at 8.)

"A MEXICAN FIESTA"—A tribute to the late Tejano singer Selena. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. June 7 at 8.)

"LUSH NIGHT: A CELEBRATION OF THE MUSIC OF BILLY STRAYHORN"—Thanks to David Hajdu's recent high-profile biography, the brilliant composer and arranger who walked in the long shadow of his boss, Duke Ellington, is receiving renewed attention. That Strayhorn (1915-67) was gay and refused to play it down may make him a hero, but what made him a giant was his stunning music—"Lush Life" and "Take the 'A' Train" would be immortal tunes even if they'd been found under a rock. Pianist

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Fred Hersch, saxophonists Joe Lovano, Jimmy Heath, Michael Hashim, and Joe Temperley, and vocalists Andy Bey, Joya Sherrill, and Judi Silvano will fête a jazz master who would have been embarrassed by all the attention. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. June 7 at 9:30.)

"SUMMER DAZE '97"—More leftovers from the great rock-and-roll freezer: John Kay and Steppenwolf, Foghat, Blue Oyster Cult, and the Pat Travers Band. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center. June 10 at 7:30.)

DAVE MATTHEWS BAND—The nation's undergraduates still pack every show, sing along with every song, and purchase Dave screen savers for their laptops, while their humble heroes have become full-fledged multi-platinum rock stars. With Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, led by the first performer to parlay banjo virtuosity and matinee-idol looks into a successful recording career. (Jones Beach Theatre. June 10-11 at 7:30.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—June 5: **TREY GUNN**, sometime member of the latest incarnation of King Crimson, shares a bill with Robert Fripp acolytes the **CALIFORNIA GUITAR TRIO**. June 6: **LEE RITENOUR**, **DAVE GRUSIN**, and friends. June 10: **GRAHAM PARKER** and the **FIGGS**. Over the past twenty years, Parker, an acerbic graduate of England's pub-rock scene, has released albums for five different record companies—and left all of them in a snit. Last year, he made an impressive indie debut on little Razor & Tie Records with "Twelve Haunted Episodes," which found the still angry if not-so-young man capable of squeezing out a few more sparks. With the excellent new-country sounds of **KIM RICHEY**.

BROWNIES, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—The **GRIFTERS** slide in on June 8. Last year's "Ain't My Lookout" was a pleasurable jolt of fractured songwriting, swamp-bucket rhythms, and the occasional backwards guitar. It was, in other words, everything you'd expect from a slacker-rock band—these guys from Memphis just do it better than anybody else.

CHICAGO B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Dedicated to the music of the Windy City. June 6-7: **ROOMFUL OF BLUES**.

CONEY ISLAND HIGH, 15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959)—**EL VEZ**, "the Mexican Elvis," is your host on June 8. Señor Vez is far more than your run-of-the-mill Elvis impersonator: he claims to be the illegitimate man-child of the King and Charo. He sings in Spanish and wears a layered outfit that he slowly unpeels and tosses into the audience. Viva Las Vegas, indeed.

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—June 4: Clear-voiced and clear-eyed singer-songwriter **DAR WILLIAMS**, another stunner from a growing list of smart, gifted women who are redefining folk music in the nineties. June 6: Hipster-doofus guitar hero **ARTO LINDSAY**. June 10: Vocalist **KURT ELLING** swings over from the Village Gate. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—June 4-6: Proving once and for all that there are no third acts in popular music for anybody but Eric Clapton, **STEVE WINWOOD** has just released a lackluster new album called

"Junction 7." Nevertheless, from "Gimme Some Lovin'" to "Higher Love," this great and instantly identifiable singer (and killer keyboardist) has been a certifiable rock-and-roll original. Live, he's a movable hall-of-fame act. June 7: Slimmed down to a svelte twelve-piece, **POI DOG PONDING** has found its focus, both in the studio (on 1995's deliciously danceable "Pomegranate") and in its celebratory live show (beautifully captured on the new double album "Liquid White Light"). June 9: The alternately lush and bleak British rock of **RADIOHEAD**.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—June 9: Teen-age Australian wunderkind **BEN LEE** entertains the troops. June 10: Free-jazz and downtown-rock drummer **WILLIAM HOOKER**.

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—June 4: Tameful modern rock with **SLOAN**. June 5: The next Spice Girls? Already huge in England, **KENICKIE** brings its brand of bubble-gum pop in for a brief Stateside invasion. June 6: Up-and-coming Alanis clones **K'S CHOICE**.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—June 9: Latin singing star **ALBITA** burns it up.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—June 4: "MANIFEST '97," a benefit evening featuring **GIL SCOTT-HERON**, **THE LAST POETS**, and others. June 6: **WILL OLDHAM**, creator of the desolate, back-porch weirdnesses of Palace Music. June 9: The Irish sounds of **SOLAS**.



Barbara Carroll, in Bemelmans Bar, at the Carlyle Hotel.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **SUSANNAH MC CORKLE** is currently at work in the Oak Room. Dining.

BIRDLAND, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—The legendary club has a new address and bigger digs. **TANAREID** (June 4-5) features speed-demon bassist **RUFUS REID**, whose awesome technique is tempered by excellent taste, and his frequent accompanist, drummer **AKIRA TANA**. June 6-7: The **DAVE STRYKER** band. (See Concerts.) June 10: Vivacious wife-and-husband vocalists **JACKIE & ROY** celebrate their fifth year in the business. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. Through June 9: Accompanied by a twenty-one-piece orchestra, seventies light-jazz icon **CHUCK MANGIONE** presides over "Mangione Madness." **HERBIE MANN'S CELEBRATION** and the **ARTURO SANDOVAL** sextet start June 10. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through June, the inimitable **BOBBY SHORT**. On Mondays, **WOODY ALLEN** plays with the **EDDY DAVIS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND**. . . .

¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano. Her timing is infallible, and she is equally at ease with legato, backpedalling figures, and double-time sprints.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Showboaters abound in the new generation of jazz stars, and **JAMES CARTER** (through June 8) may be their Evel Knievel. The behemoths of the tenor sax—**Don Byas**, **Gene Ammons**, **David Murray**—hover above, whispering their secrets in his ear. A true Renaissance man, he also takes on the alto, baritone, and soprano saxes, the bass clarinet, and the flute. It's athletic, awesome, and thoroughly exhausting. From June 10: The **JACKY TERRASSON** trio. Mondays belong to national treasure **LES PAUL**.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. June 4-7: Like an old married couple, the sharp, engaging pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and her longtime colleague, the revered bassist **CECIL MC BEE**, seem to complete each other's musical sentences.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—**STEVE TURRE** and **SANCTIFIED SHELLS** are in June 4-5. If trombonist Turre's obsession with the ocean's natural instruments seems a bit out there, his powers of persuasion certainly don't: he's got his whole band eagerly blowing into conch shells, producing beautiful tones that have little precedent in jazz. June 6-8: **STEVE COLEMAN** and the **MYSTIC RHYTHM SOCIETY**. Coleman, the man who brought the jazz world M-Base (a subversive combo dedicated to thumbing its nose at the neo-con movement of the eighties), continues to stir his R. & B./hip-hop/bebop brew. If it doesn't always hold together, you can concentrate on the leader—he's one of the best saxophonists of the past twenty years.

SMALLS, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night. June 6-7: With his gutsy tone and classic yet fluid approach, **DON BRADEN** is rapidly shaping up into a major-league tenor saxophonist. He's developed a special rapport with his quartet's bassist, **JORIS TEEPE**, with whom he's cut two fine recordings. June 10: A very sharp young drummer who shone with Joshua Redman's band, **BRIAN BLADE** is someone to watch—monitoring growth like his can be thrilling. Stocked to the gills with exciting players, the **JASON LINDNER BIG BAND** holds court every Monday.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through June 8: The **PAUL MOTIAN ELECTRIC BEBOP BAND**. This two-guitar-and-two-sax band is far more successful than you'd think. A smart selection of tunes, from Parker and Mingus classics to drummer Motian's own moody originals, gets a serious and energetic treatment. This is not fusion. Repeat: this is not fusion. From June 10: The **MARC CARY** group. Dining.

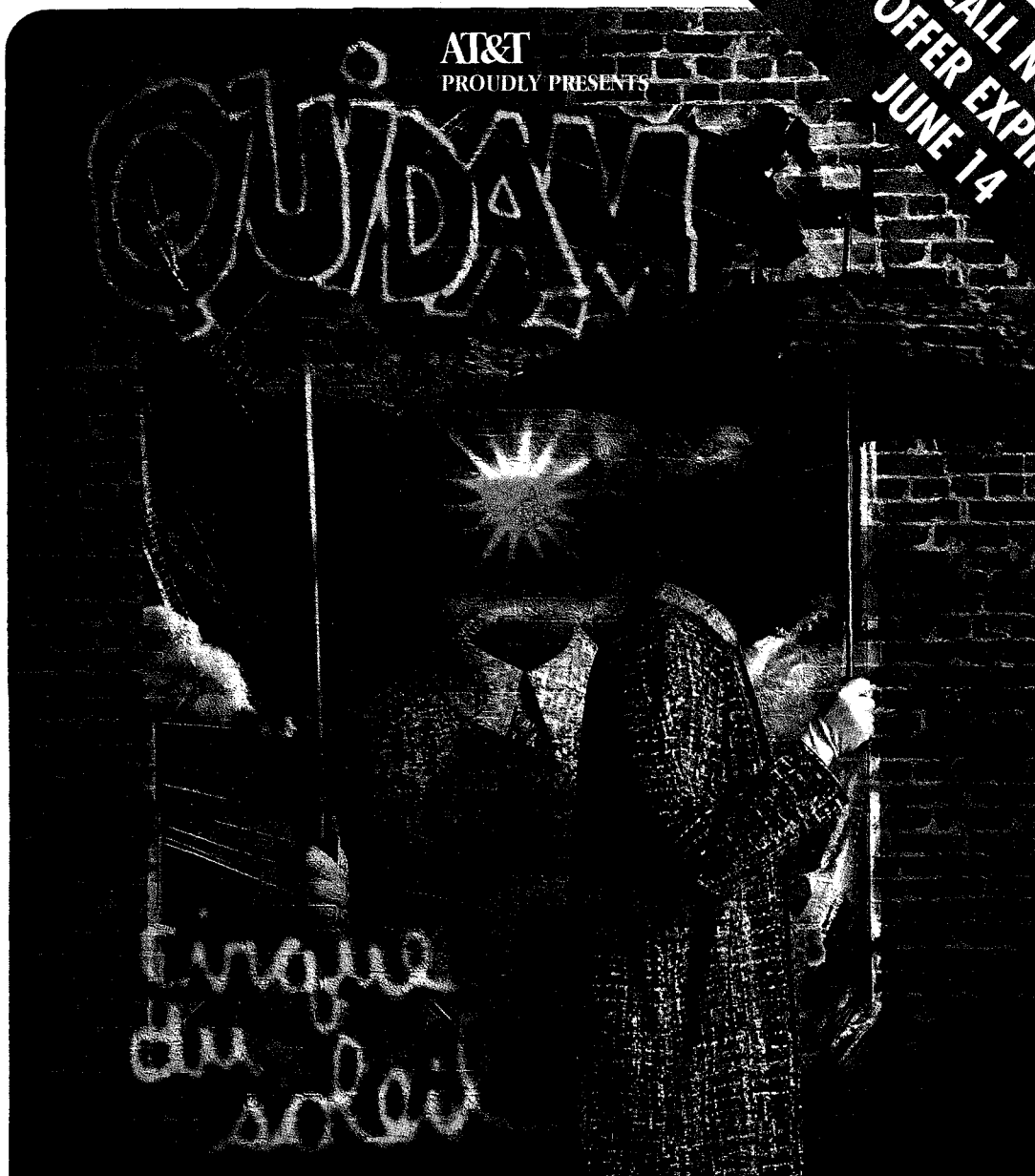
VILLAGE GATE, 240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252)—**CORNELL DUPREE** and **STUFF!** (June 5-7) may not have invented funk, but when the band's sleek ocean liner of a rhythm section surges ahead, you know you're in the presence of true groove masters. Guitarist Dupree and his crew all have jazz credentials, but it's their R. & B. fuel that gives them distinction. June 8: Thirty-year-old improvisational vocalist **KURT ELLING**.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—**RAY DRUMMOND**, New York's most reliable bassist, is in with his quintet through June 8. When you lay down the kind of shag carpet that Drummond regularly does, just about anything on top sounds good, but saxophonist **CRAIG HANDY** in the front line is an added bonus. The **HAROLD ASHBY** quartet takes over starting June 10. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

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ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—The museum's collection of Chinese art, one of the finest outside Asia, now has room to glow: after two years of construction, a new series of galleries nearly doubles the exhibition space. These cool, quiet rooms create the ideal atmosphere in which to grasp the rarefied sensibility of imperial Chinese painting and calligraphy. Upstairs, four new galleries are devoted to a spectacular collection of Chinese decorative art, ranging from polychrome painted ivories to carved lapis lazuli and jade to resplendent textiles (including one of gold-brocade rabbits leaping across a field of silver, from the tomb of a seventeenth-century emperor). . . . ¶ "The Gods of War: Sacred Imagery and the Decoration of Arms and Armor." Some of the most sublime refinements of civilized craftsmanship have been pressed into the service of socially sanctioned slaughter. Predictably, the Japanese are the aesthetic victors here. A nineteenth-century horse's head, used in military processions, is a boldly stylized, golden-horned, flaring-nostrilled, furry-mustached triumph of the sculptor's imagination; a shieldlike seventeenth-century *jingasa* helmet depicts a gorgeously plug-ugly literary god. Other notable entries include an adorable snaggletoothed demon on a Balinese kris stand; an unusual Korean suit of armor made of layers of cloth (poignantly stamped with Taoist symbols to protect its wearer); the wheel lock from a seventeenth-century South German hunting rifle, with Salome's dance and John the Baptist's decapitation engraved in steel with exquisite, detailed precision; and a blood-curdling representation of Muhammad's forked, serrated sword. . . . ¶ "The Glory of Byzantium." Through July 6. . . . ¶ "Cartier: 1900-1939," a glittering exhibition of bijoux from the great jewelry workshops of Paris, London, and New York. Through Aug. 3. . . . ¶ "Indian Court Painting: Sixteenth-Nineteenth Century." Through July 6. . . . ¶ "The Print in the North: The Age of Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden." Through July 13. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Objects of Desire: The Modern Still Life," an exhibition devoted to domestic arrangements, from Cézanne's apples to Warhol's Campbell's soup cans. Through Aug. 26. . . . ¶ "More Than One: Twentieth Century Print Portfolios" assembles examples of serial presentations from Expressionism ("Hell," by Max Beckmann) to Conceptualism ("Demolished," by Rachel Whiteread). Through Sept. 2. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—Selections from the permanent collection are on view. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The final days of the 1997 Biennial. The fourth floor has closed; other sections of the Biennial close, in stages,

by June 15. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.) **AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk," an exhibition about vanishing and extinct species.



"From Pockets to Pouches: Three Centuries of Handbags," at the Brooklyn Museum.

Through Sept. 1. . . . ¶ "Up in Central Park: Birds and Birders" provides a guide to the discipline, with displays devoted to seasonal birds, full-time residents, and the habitats of both in the adjacent park. Through Aug. 14. . . . ¶ "The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs." Fossils, time lines, and a recreation of a paleontological dig, displayed in the shadow of a seventy-foot-long reconstruction of a mamenchisaurus. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"From Pockets to Pouches: Three Centuries of Handbags." More than forty pieces from the museum's collection demonstrate the evolution of the purse, from Colonial-era gaming bags to the elaborately beaded inventions of Judith Leiber. Through June 22. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5, and Saturday evenings until 9.)

ASIA SOCIETY, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—"Gods, Kings, and Tigers," a magnificent display of court paintings, drawings, and regalia, lent by the royal family of Kotah, a Hindu principality (until India achieved nationhood, fifty years ago) near Jaipur. Through July 20. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155)—"Enlightenment Embodied: The Art of the Japanese Buddhist Sculptor." To inaugurate its exquisitely redesigned galleries, and to celebrate its ninetieth anniversary, the society has assembled a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition of Japanese Buddhist sculptures, ranging from a tiny, naive bronze of the infant Siddhartha to a life-size thirteenth-century polychrome wood carving of the reclining Buddha at the point of death. A unique seven-hundred-year-old sculpture of Monju, the bodhisattva of wisdom, is made of lacquered paper. The guest curator, Hiromitsu Washizuka, from the Tokyo National Museum, has brought over some of Japan's most precious art works; indeed, the Japanese government has officially designated one of them (a serene bronze relief of the Buddha preaching to his disciples, from seventh-century Nara) a national treasure. In addition to the objects borrowed from museums, the exhibit includes several images removed from temples where they've been enshrined for centuries; priests in Japan dislodged the statues' "souls" before their jour-

ney to foreign shores and will resanctify them after their return home. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.) **JEWISH MUSEUM**, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—"Points of Entry," three photography exhibitions ("A Nation of Strangers,"

"Reframing America," and "Tracing Cultures") exploring immigration. Through Aug. 17. . . .

¶ "Chicken Soup and Wontons: Jews and Food on American Television," a video installation, with television footage drawn from the National Jewish Archive of Broadcasting, considers Jewish cooking and Jewish stereotypes, from "The Goldbergs" to "The Nanny." Through Sept. 28. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (369-4880)—The museum's hundred and seventy-second annual juried exhibition presents work from more than two hundred artists. Past award winners include Thomas Eakins, Paul Cadmus, and Wayne Thiebaud. Through June 22. (Open Wednesdays

through Sundays, noon to 5, and Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400)—"Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village," an exhibition devoted to the African-American and Irish community that was razed to make way for Central Park, includes a re-creation of one of its streets (85th Street, near Sixth Avenue), histories of some typical residents (Andrew Williams, bootblack; Epiphany Davis, porter), and a reference center at which museumgoers can follow the subsequent genealogies of Seneca Village families. Through Aug. 10. . . . ¶ "The Birds of America," a hundred and fifty watercolors by John James Audubon, the illegitimate son of a French sea captain and a chambermaid, who came to these shores to avoid a Napoleonic conscription. Through Aug. 10. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"Visionary Daughters of Albion: A Bicentenary Celebration of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley" revisits the papers, publications, and personal effects of the mother and daughter, authors of "The Vindication of the Rights of Woman" and "Frankenstein," respectively. The pair witnessed—or caused—a startling amount of public and private turbulence: the show includes the suicide note of Percy Shelley's first wife, Harriet Westbrook, who wished her husband the happiness of which she felt deprived. It also makes some surprising but natural connections, linking, for instance, the Reign of Terror and Lord Byron's promiscuity. Salomon Room; through Sept. 13. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, uptown and downtown galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; Chelsea galleries are generally closed Tuesdays and open Sundays.)

HENRI MATISSE (1869-1954)—Two shows for connoisseurs of twentieth-century artist books. The small but superb "Matisse and Tériade," at Yoshii (20 W. 57th St., 265-8876; through June 28), documents the collaboration between the French master and the book-and-magazine publisher E. Tériade. The show in-

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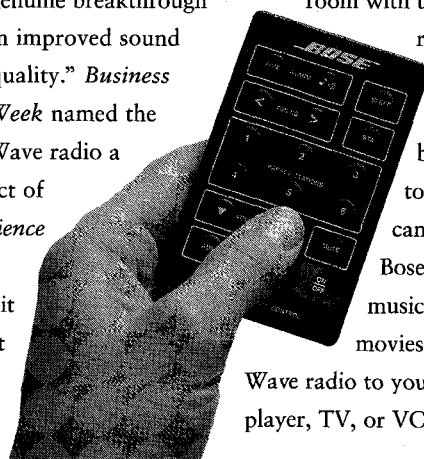
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cludes materials for the interior spreads and covers that Matisse did for the influential magazine *Verve*, as well as drawings and cut-outs for "Jazz," his most famous published work. A complementary exhibition at Hirschl & Adler Modern (21 E. 70th St., 535-8810; through June 20) includes an original set of twenty stencil prints for "Jazz."

GEORGE SEGAL—An impressive new batch of plaster-cast sculptures and a series of charcoal-and-pastel portraits, by the sculptor who created the figures for the newly opened Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, in Washington, D.C. Through June 6. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. 586-0110.)

"ALFRED JENSEN AND TONY SMITH: PERSONAL GEOMETRY"—A show exploring the work of two artists who put their own stamp on the tradition of geometric abstraction. Smith (1912-80) is a legendary figure. His monumental sculpture "Moondog," currently on view at Cooper, is one of the highlights of the season. (See Galleries—Chelsea.) The works here—much smaller, but still splendid—include a small bronze version of "Moondog," as well as a small cast-bronze version of one of Smith's most famous monumental sculptures, "Smoke" (1967). Jensen (1903-81) doesn't have quite as high a profile. He produced vividly colored paintings, and, while he was drawn to diagram-

terrifying new sculptures, an enigmatic monster crafted from fabric and bone, in a vitrine. Other artists represented include Enzo Cucchi, Eric Fischl, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, and Joel Shapiro. Through June 21. (Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888.)

"MEXICO SELF-PORTRAITS"—A remarkable collection of twentieth-century paintings and drawings, which runs the gamut from an early, sombre José Clemente Orozco to a series of exuberant fantasies by the contemporary painters Julio Galán and Ray Smith. An unusually naturalistic Diego Rivera shows the artist holding a scroll with an inscription, in the style of Baroque Spanish portraits. It's paired with a witty depiction, in pencil, of Rivera drawing his image in a mirror, which is dramatically reflected in another mirror. Through June 13. (Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. 399-5510.)

SHORT LIST—**PAT ADAMS**, Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through June 21. **CHUCK AGRO**, McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. 956-3366. Through June 7. **RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER**, Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 752-2929. Through June 28. **SAINT CLAIR CEMIN**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through June 21. **FRANCESCO CLEMENTE**, Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313. Through June 14. **ELENA CLIMENT**, Martin, 23 E. 73rd St. 288-2213. Through June 28. **RICHARD ESTES**, Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900. Open Mondays; through June 7. **LI HUAYI**, Kaikodo, 164 E. 64th St. 223-0121. Through June 7. **MARIA IZQUIERDO**, Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Open daily, except Mondays, noon to 6; through July 27. **MASAYUKI NAGARE**, McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. 319-1996. Open Mondays; through June 30. **JOHN SLOAN**, Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 307-5730. Through June 6. **WAYNE THIEBAUD**, Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 988-6870. Through June 27. **JOAQUIN TORRES-GARCIA**, Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. 755-7288. Through July 18.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

MAUREN GALLACE—Small paintings of country roads and houses in landscape settings. Initially, their conventional subject matter is utterly soothing; only after a moment's reflection do you come to dwell on the spatial incongruities, or on the fact that none of the buildings are equipped with doors or windows. The images have an abstract quality, and they transmit a frisson of existential unease. Through June 14. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121. Open Tuesdays; closed Sundays.)

GARY HUME—Enamel paintings that alternately evoke the swinging London of the sixties and American Pop of the same period, rendered with a cool *fin de millénaire* sensibility. Through June 27. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Opens at noon; closed Sundays.)

BRICE MARDEN—Two new paintings, displayed alongside five epitaph stones from the Tang and Northern Wei dynasties on whose designs they are loosely based. It's well known that Chinese calligraphy has had a profound influence on the transformation of Marden's style from the monochrome panels for which he first gained renown, in the seventies, to the more gestural, weblike patterns he now favors. In his last show, he seemed to be moving away from more overt calligraphic schemas; while these new paintings continue in that stylistic direction, their proximity to the stones reiterates the artist's deep affinity for Chinese art. The installation itself is very elegant. The paintings—which seem more involved with illusionistic depth than his

previous works—are superb. Through June 27. (Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200. Open Tuesdays; closed Sundays.)

TONY SMITH (1912-80)—Two sculptures and related works on paper. The showpiece here is "Moondog" (1964), a tower of octahedral columns rising some seventeen feet—one of the most impressive works of sculpture exhibited in New York recently. The show also includes the more modestly scaled but still remarkable "Smog" (1970), a colony of interlocking tetrahedrons. Through June 7. (Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Open Tuesdays; closed Sundays.)

"BROKEN HOME"—Conceptualists from the sixties to the present (Gordon Matta-Clark, Absalon, Glen Seator, among others) weigh in on shelter and the life within it. Through June 7. (Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Open Tuesdays; opens Sundays at noon.)

SHORT LIST—**ANDREW EHRENEWORTH**, Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Through June 15. **TONY FEHER**, D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460. Open Tuesdays, closed Sundays; through June 21. **CATHERINE HOWE**, Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. 741-3318. Through June 14. **JIM SHAW** and **GARY SIMMONS**, Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100. Both shows through June 7. **MEG WEBSTER**, Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through June 28.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

GILBERT AND GEORGE—"The Fundamental Pictures," a two-gallery exhibition by the British duo. Their "Naked Shit Pictures" were a sensation in London a few years ago; this latest work continues exploring themes from that series. In each picture, the pair appears naked against an apparently abstract background that is actually an enlargement of a microscopic image of one of the substances the artists consider fundamental to life: blood, semen, feces, or urine. As always, their pictures have tremendous formal brio, although the crazy humor of the earlier pieces is tempered in these more abstract ones. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway, 966-6160; and Lehman Maupin, 39 Greene St., 965-0753. Both shows through June 28.)

GUILLERMO KUITCA—"Poema Pedagógico," a series of new paintings in which the Argentine artist continues his psychologically charged explorations of architecture; once again, architectural space becomes intensely metaphoric and expressionistic. Previous series have emphasized the diagrammatic, geometric order of architectural plans, but in these new works the lines become skewed, nervous, directionless; the sense of foreboding is far darker. The execution remains impeccable. Through June 7. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. 431-3685.)

ELIZABETH MURRAY—Recent paintings by an artist known for her clever hybridization of abstract and representational forms. While the relief surfaces of her shaped canvases seem to have become shallower, the formal vigor that animates their incongruous elements remains vivid. Looking over these paintings, you can't help remarking the breadth of her influence on younger artists mining the tradition of biomorphic abstraction. Through June 20. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. 431-9224.)

ALEXIS ROCKMAN—"Dioramas," elaborate mixed-medium pictures incorporating painted and sculpted elements, digitized photographs, objets trouvés, etc., all encased in heavy resin blocks. The artist specializes in eco-conscious Grand Guignol: like Damien Hirst and Mark Dion, he is interested in the phenomena of nature run amok or, at least, gone awry. These dioramas are as rich in bizarre details as were his previous, more conventional paintings; their references to the history of collage and assemblage are very self-conscious, yet their sensibility is utterly now. Many of them are quite ugly, too—in a good way. Through June 28. (Gorney, 100 Greene St. 966-4480.)

"RAJASTHANI MINIATURES"—Watercolors from the fifteenth century through the nineteenth, depicting idealized scenes from the lives of the princely castes of northwestern India. Through June 7. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)



Self-portrait by Alexis Rockman (Gorney).

matic arrangements, often including quasi-mystical symbols and numerals, his style leaned toward thick, clotted impastos. Through June 20. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292.)

"ALLEGORY"—A thoughtful, wide-ranging exploration, curated by Joseph Helman, of ways that contemporary artists are reinventing symbolism; it includes works by some very distinguished artists. Roy Lichtenstein has a new sculpture here—a flattened-out bronze bust of a woman, blond on one side and brunette on the other—called "Woman: Sunlight/Moonlight." Andres Serrano is represented by a startling, sensitive Cibachrome of a young black woman tenderly suckling a white baby in front of a stone column. Paul Waldman has contributed a spectacular sculpture of a little frame house floating in space, accessed by twisting staircases embellished with gargoyles and tiny birds—an obscure homage, he says, to Yeats. There's a witty painting by Ed Ruscha, the usual gilded drivel from Jenny Holzer, and one of Louise Bourgeois's



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—*Publishers Weekly*

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SHORT LIST—MARK DI SUVERO, Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. 228-2828. Through June 14. . . . LEIKO IKEMURA, Knowlton, 568 Broadway. 966-2625. Through June 14. . . . JOHN MC CRACKEN, Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074. Through June 21. . . . ELLIOTT PUCKETTE, Kasmin, 74 Grand St. 219-3219. Through June 14. . . . BEATRICE RIESE, A.I.R., 40 Wooster St. 966-0799. Through June 14. . . . JULIE ROBERTS, Sean Kelly, 43 Mercer St. 343-2405. Through July 3. . . . NEDKO SOLAKOV, Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300. Through June 7. . . . IONEL TALPAZAN, American Primitive, 594 Broadway. 966-1530. Through July 12.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

CHRISTIE'S—June 4: Rare and collectible books. . . .
¶ June 5: American paintings, including an exceptionally valuable private collection that comprises notable works by Harnett, Peto, Homer, Eakins, and Hassam (among others). . . .
¶ June 6: Native American works. . . . ¶ June 10: Jewelry. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.) . . .
At **CHRISTIE'S EAST**: Moderately priced twentieth-century decorative art. (219 E. 67th St. 606-0400. June 10.)
SOTHEY'S—June 4: Native American art. . . .
¶ June 5: European sculpture, furniture, tapestries, armor, and vertu. . . . ¶ June 6: An American-paintings sale rich in regional Impressionism and early modernism, though the show topper is a huge oil, "Prometheus Bound," by Thomas Cole. . . . ¶ June 9: Russian art, including nearly a hundred lots of icons. . . . ¶ June 10: An arcade sale of modestly priced jewelry. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)
PHILLIPS—Jewelry and watches, both antique and modern. (406 E. 79th St. 570-4830. June 10.)
DOYLE—An auction of Americana, including furniture, paintings, and decorative art. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730. June 4.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

HELEN LEVITT—Forty vintage New York prints from 1936 to 1945. (See also I.C.P. Midtown.) Through June 27. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220.)
"**GLORIOUS GARDENS**"—Inflorescent imagery from throughout the present century, by such artists as Atget, Sudek, Blossfeldt, Porter, and Meyerowitz. Through June 28. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)
INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777)—"Art & Science: Investigating Matter," a series of laboratory photographs by Catherine Wagner. Through June 15. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)
INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (860-1777)—"Helen Levitt: Crosstown," a retrospective of the pre-

mier New York street photographer's career. . . .
¶ "Fast Forward: Growing Up in the Shadow of Hollywood," Lauren Greenfield's recent series on Los Angeles youth. (A complementary show of prints from this series is at Saul, 560 Broadway, 431-0747, through June 28.) Both shows through Sept. 7. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—MARIO ALGAZE, Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059. Through July 5. . . . ROBERT BLACKMON, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Through June 28. . . . MARILYN BRIDGES, Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through July 31. . . . LYLE ASHTON HARRIS, Erben, 476 Broome St. 966-5283. Through June 21. . . . DAVE HEATH, Lowinsky, 578 Broadway. 226-5440. Through June 28. . . . TEUN HOCKS, P.P.O.W., 532 Broadway. 941-8642. Through June 28. . . . ERIC LINDBLOOM, Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Through June 21. . . . TINA MODOTTI, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through June 21. . . . JOHN PFAHL, Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through June 30. . . . CLIFFORD ROSS, Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. 628-5300. Through June 14. . . . LYNN SAVILLE, Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255. Through June 28. . . . FRANK STEWART, Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; through June 14. . . . THOMAS STRUTH, Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Open Mondays; through June 28. . . . PIERRE VERGER, Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through June 28. . . . JOEL PETER WITKIN, Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Through June 21. . . . FRANK YAMRUS, Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767. Open Tuesdays; through June 29.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Jewish Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

"**DRAGON BOND RITE**"—The premiere of a production created by the Korean-American composer Jin Hi Kim, involving music, dance, theatre, poetry, and rituals, from Korea, Japan, India, Indonesia, and Tuva. (Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015. June 4-6 at 8.)
"**LUTH**"—A new opera by Deborah Drattell. (Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. June 5 at 8, June 7 at 8:30, and June 8 at 6. For information about tickets, call 996-1100.)
PICCOLO TEATRO DELL'OPERA—Presenting Weill's "Die Dreigroschenoper," semi-staged, and performed in German (with English super-titles). (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. June 6 at 7 and June 7 at 2 and 8.)



The Goldman Memorial Band plays at the New York Botanical Garden and at Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park.

HANK BLAUSTEIN

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Presenting "The Merry Widow," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. June 6-7 at 7:30 and June 8 at 2:30.)

ENCOMPASS OPERA THEATRE—Presenting George Quincy's "Home and the River," an opera about personal and political conflicts during the Civil War. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. June 10 at 8. For information about tickets, call 594-7880. Through June 19.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK MANDOLIN ORCHESTRA—Mandolins of all sizes join to perform a repertoire that ranges from classical to bluegrass, with a guest appearance by the Providence Mandolin Orchestra of Rhode Island. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. June 8 at 2. For information about tickets, call 534-4440.)

GOLDMAN MEMORIAL BAND—The ensemble, which celebrates its eightieth anniversary this season, is the third-oldest professional musical organization in New York City. (Only the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic have survived longer.) Founded by the noted march composer Edwin Franko Goldman, the band has not only entertained generations of listeners with its free summer concerts but also presented important premieres (including the first American performance of Berlioz's "Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale") and enriched the repertoire by commissioning works from such composers as Vaughan Williams, Respighi, Grainger, and Gould. To open the season, Gene Young—the group's musical director since 1990—has dipped into the archives to re-create a program the band performed on August 8, 1919, a pops concert that included Goldman's "Eagle Eyes" march, instrumental excerpts from "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," MacDowell's "To a Wild Rose," Sibelius's "Finlandia," and works by Henry Hadley and Victor Herbert. (New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park. June 8 at 2. No tickets necessary beyond garden admission. ... ¶ Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. June 8 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

ROTTENBERG CHORALE AND CHAMBER SINGERS—The choir's program includes Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" and Paul Ben-Haim's "Sephardic Folk Songs." (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. June 8 at 7:30.)

NEW YORK POPS—Skitch Henderson leads selections from popular film scores. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. June 9 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

LISTENING BOOTH

TRIOS TO DISCOVER—Several recent releases prove that there are even more worthwhile piano trios than you probably thought. Anyone who considers JOHANN NEPOMUK HUMMEL (1778-1837) negligible should listen to the Borodin Trio's full-blooded interpretations of his Piano Trios No. 1, No. 5, and No. 7 (Chandos 9529). All three works are entrancing examples of the late-Classical style; the Seventh, which uncannily recalls Mozart in its first movement and Beethoven in its second, is exceptional. MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO (1895-1968) is best known today for his film scores, but he deserves broader exposure. The Trio Mezzena-Bonucci has just committed sunny performances of his two piano trios to disk (Dynamic CDS 136). Composed in 1928 and 1932, they have an appealing Italian clarity, though Brahmsian seriousness makes frequent incursions. Since a theme from the opening of the first reappears near the end of the second, they make an especially fine pair. ENRIQUE GRANADOS (1867-1916) is another composer who gets more lip service than performance. His Piano Trio is well worth checking out in a recent release by the slightly rough-hewn Piano Trio Salzburg (CPO 999-365-2); Brahms again casts a shadow, unmistakably in the finale, but on the whole this charming work has more to do with Mediterranean palm-court elegance.

NATIONAL CHORALE—Performing songs by Berlin, Porter, and Bernstein, with Martin Josman directing. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. June 10 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

RECITALS

FRIENDS & ENEMIES OF NEW MUSIC—The modern-music group performs songs by Tobias Picker (including the premiere of an E. E. Cummings setting), as well as recent works by Paul Moravec, Tom Cipullo, Ben Yarmolinsky, and John Link. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. June 4 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

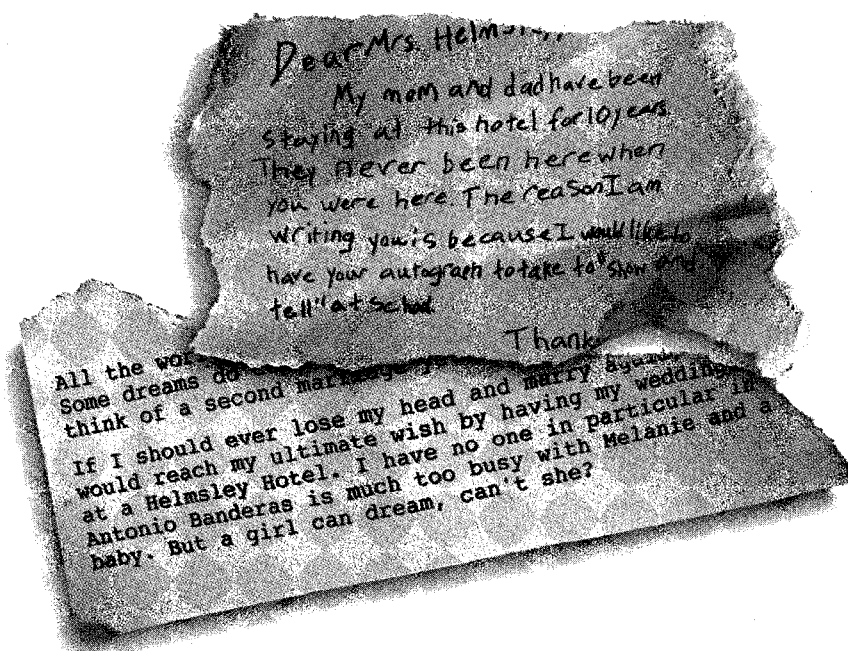
BARGEMUSIC—For the summer, Friday-evening concerts supplement the usual Thursday and Sunday offerings. June 5 at 7:30 and June 8 at 4: Cellist Melissa Meell and pianist Diane Walsh perform Mendelssohn's D-Major Cello Sonata; violinist Ida Levin and Ms. Walsh perform Martinů's Violin Sonata No. 1; and all join for Schumann's F-Major Piano Trio. ... ¶ June 6 at 7:30: Woodwind quintets by Irving Fine, Joseph Jongen, and

Paul Taffanel, as well as a wind quartet by Arthur Berger. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

CARLO GRANTE—Pianist, performing a sonata by Giovanni Benedetto Platti, six of Debussy's Preludes, Ernesto Halffter's "Trois Homages" (dedicated to Joaquín Turina, Federico Mompou, and Rodolfo Halffter, the composer's brother), four of Kaikhosro Sorabji's "Transcendental Etudes," excerpts from Bloch's "Visions and Prophecies," and Balakirev's "Islamey." (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. June 5 at 8.)

CHAMBER-MUSIC JOURNEYMEN—Eight ensembles of young musicians who have been participating in a three-week regimen of master classes at Carnegie Hall conclude their stay with three free concerts. Though the repertoire will not be decided on until the last minute, the programs are expected to include works by Bartók, Beethoven, Berg, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Schumann. (Carnegie Hall. June 6 at noon, 3, and 7:30. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 247-7800.)

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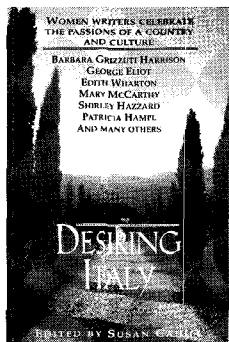
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Molly O'Neill

Wednesday, June 11th - 7:00-8:00 PM
Lincoln Triangle - 1972 Broadway at 66th Street
Discussion - Signing



Find out how to throw a fabulous dinner party. New York Times Magazine food columnist Molly O'Neill will discuss and sign copies of *The Pleasure of Your Company*, a witty new guide that covers all the details of orchestrating a party—whether it's a backyard barbecue or a sit-down meal.

David Sedaris

Friday, June 13th - 7:00-8:00 PM
Lincoln Triangle - 1972 Broadway at 66th Street
Reading - Performance - Signing

As part of the Toyota Comedy Festival, bestselling author David Sedaris reads from and signs copies of *Naked*. In this hilarious new collection, he describes such escapades as trying to reintroduce Shakespearean English to rural North Carolina and celebrating Christmas with a paroled prostitute.



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DAVID KOREVAAR and ILAN RECHTMAN—The pianists share a recital, with Mr. Korevaar performing his own Preludes and Poulenc's "Les Soirées de Nazelles," and Mr. Rechtman offering works by Chopin (including his First and Third Ballades). (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. June 8 at noon.)

GUILD TRIO—The piano trio performs Bolcom's "Spring Trio—A Bouquet of Traditional Flower Rags," Peter Winkler's "Nine Waltzes," a group of Chopin waltzes and mazurkas (arranged by Mr. Winkler), and Piazzolla's Three Tangos. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. June 8 at 2.)

NURIT PACHT—The violinist is assisted by pianist Ilan Rechtman in works by Szymanowski, Beethoven (his "Spring" Sonata), and Kreisler. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. June 8 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

JO-ANN STERNBERG—Performing Brahms's two clarinet sonatas, with pianist Ilan Rechtman assisting. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. June 9 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

ELYSIUM STRING QUARTET—The foursome plays Ravel's String Quartet, the premiere of Dinos Constantinides's Preludes for String Quartet, and Dvořák's A-Major Piano Quintet (Op. 81, with Eleanor Bindman). (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 9 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

LONG ISLAND MOZART FESTIVAL—The Sea Cliff Chamber Players present the first of three musical weekends. June 7 at 2: Vocal and chamber works by Mozart and Schubert. ... At 5: Actor Eli Wallach reads excerpts from Mozart's letters. ... At 7: Mozart's G-Major Violin Sonata (K. 379), several songs by Schubert, and Brahms's Horn Trio. ... June 8 at 2: Schubert's String Trio in B-Flat Major, Beethoven's F-Major Violin Sonata (the "Spring") and E-Flat-Major Duet for Viola and Cello, and Mozart's G-Minor Piano Quartet. ... At 5: An all-Mozart program geared to younger audiences. ... At 7: Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata, plus string quintets by Mozart (in D Major, K. 593) and Brahms (in G Major, Op. 111). (Sands Point Preserve, Port Washington. For information, call 516-671-6263. The festival continues through June 22.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN—In the opening concert of the festival's sixty-eighth season, the Leontovitch String Quartet performs "Rain," by its namesake, the Ukrainian composer Mykola Dmytrovitch Leontovitch, as well as Myroslav Soryk's Melody for String Quartet, Schubert's A-Minor Quartet (D. 804, the "Rosamunde"), and Schumann's Piano Quintet (with Samuel Sanders assisting). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. June 8 at 3. The season continues through Aug. 31.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE BELMONT STAKES—Over the past nineteen years, four Thoroughbreds have had a shot at the Triple Crown; the last time one won, a Democrat was in the White House. This Saturday, after taking the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness, Silver Charm gets his chance to make history. Come to find it, that Democrat was a Southerner, too. (Belmont Park, Elmont, Long Island. 516-488-6000. June 7 at 5:30.)

"TIANANMEN SQUARE REMEMBERED"—Patti Smith, John Cale, and the Tibetan musician Nawang Khechog join human-rights activist Harry Wu, former student leader Chai Ling, and others in a memorial service for those who perished eight years ago in the streets of Beijing. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. June 4 at 8.)

TALKS—June 6 at 7: Richard Martin, curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, and designer Rohit Bal discuss the influence of traditional Indian textiles on Western clothing. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742.) ... June 10 at 6: Leo Ou-fan Lee, professor of Chinese literature at Harvard University, considers language and popular culture in present-day Hong Kong. (China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. 744-8181.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Expert choices for this week's reading

Bradley on the court

The Knicks may not have made it to this week's N.B.A. finals, but we've still got a basketball jones. So we put in a call to one of the team's best-known former members, retired senator Bill Bradley, to ask for a few thoughts about books on rebounding and boxing out. "I have many favorite basketball-related books," he told us. A couple of volumes rated especially high on the Senator's list:



THE CITY GAME, by Pete Axthelm. Bradley called this out-of-print 1970 book "the best description of basketball played in New York City streets during the sixties and seventies."

THE BREAKS OF THE GAME, by David Halberstam (Ballantine). The author spent almost every day and night during the 1979-80 season with the Portland Trail Blazers and brought this book out in 1981.

In addition, two books about Bradley himself:

LIFE ON THE RUN, by Bill Bradley (Vintage). Bradley's 1976 account of the final days of the Knicks' championship season two years earlier.

A SENSE OF WHERE YOU ARE, by John McPhee (Farrar, Straus). The author wrote this profile of Bradley (part of which originally ran in these pages) in 1965.

And a few favorites of our own:

TO THE HOOP: THE SEASONS OF A BASKETBALL LIFE, by Ira Berkow (Basic Books). A no-surrender descent-into-middle-age story by a reporter and columnist for the *Times* who has devoted himself to basketball.

IN THESE GIRLS, HOPE IS A MUSCLE, by Madeleine Blais (Atlantic Monthly/Grove). The author followed a high-school girls' team on their path to the championship.

THE SMART TAKE FROM THE STRONG, by Pete Carril with Dan White (Simon & Schuster). The memoirs of the wily, straight-arrow Princeton head coach, recently retired.

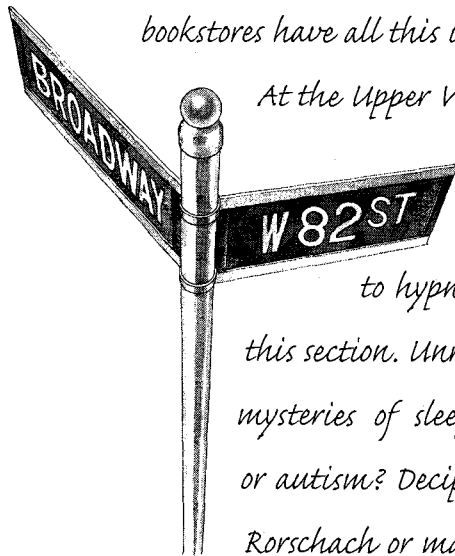
THE LAST SHOT: CITY STREETS, BASKETBALL DREAMS, by Darcy Frey (Houghton Mifflin). Frey examined the way New York's public-school athletic system sets young black men up for near-certain dashed hopes of college basketball scholarships.

Out Loud

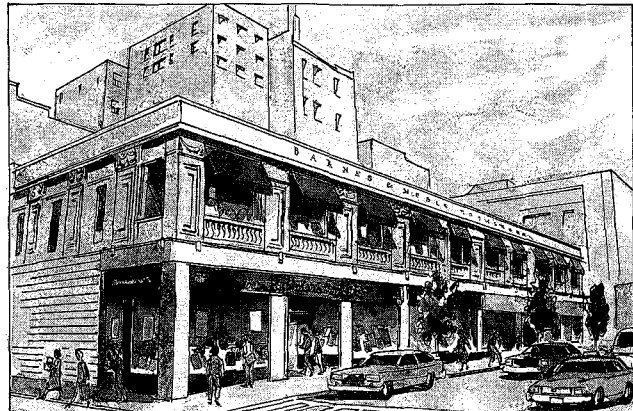
READINGS—June 4 at 6:30: Actors Joseph Wiseman and Dana Ivey read stories by Isaac Babel and Lorrie Moore, respectively, and writer Lisa Fugard reads her own work. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) ... June 9 at 7:30: Actor Malcolm McDowell revisits "A Clockwork Orange." (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848.) ... June 9 at 8:30: Liesl Schillinger, Jeremy Kareken, and Abby Ellin read short (and for the most part humorous) pieces they have written on the topic of guilt. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. Tickets at the door.) ... June 10 at 8: Lydia Davis reads from her short-story collection "Almost No Memory," and Joanna Scott offers portions of her novel "The Manikin." (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. No tickets necessary.)

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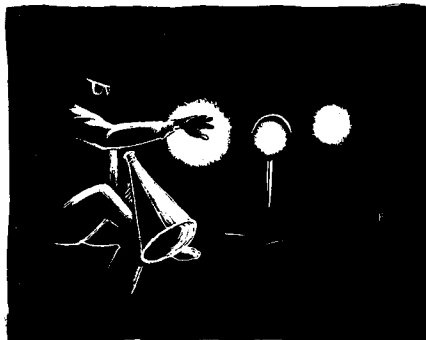
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THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

BLISS—A married couple (Craig Sheffer and Sheryl Lee) seek to deepen their love with the aid of a sex therapist (Terence Stamp). Written and directed by Lance Young. Opening June 6.

BUDDY—Rene Russo plays Trudy Lintz, a wealthy woman who earlier this century raised the title character, a gorilla, as if he were a human child. Directed by Caroline Thompson, who adapted the screenplay from Lintz's autobiography, "Animals Are My Hobby." Also with Robbie Coltrane and Alan Cumming. Opening June 6. (Criterion Center and 64th and 2nd.)

CON AIR—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening June 6. (Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, Guild, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

THE PILLOW BOOK—A drama written and directed by Peter Greenaway, centering on a woman obsessed with having calligraphic messages inscribed on her body. With Vivian Wu, Yoshi Oida, and Ewan McGregor. In Japanese and English. Opening June 6. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

TIMOTHY LEARY'S DEAD—Paul Davids's documentary on the final days of the guru of psychedelics, who died in 1996. Co-written with Todd Easton Mills. Opening June 6. (Quad Cinema.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 33.)

ADDICTED TO LOVE—A desperately misbegotten screwball comedy, though it's almost worth watching in order to see Matthew Broderick and Meg Ryan plumb new lows in sexual chemistry. Broderick plays a dreamy astronomer who comes to big, bad New York to win back his girlfriend (Kelly Preston), who's moved in with a Frenchman (Tcheky Karyo). Ryan plays the Frenchman's jilted fiancée, a photographer; she's supposed to be a tough New Yorker, so she wears scary raccoon makeup. Robert Gordon's creepy, contrived screenplay has the stars teaming up to stalk their exes, then falling in love with each other. But these are both actors who need someone more intense to react to—together they're like a pair of stuffed animals. Directed by Griffin Dunne.—S.K. (Coronet Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

AUSTIN POWERS: INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY—A parody of James Bond films and the swinging London of the sixties. The jokes are hit and miss, but Mike Myers, who plays dual roles (he's the super-sleuth photographer of the title, who's awakened from a cryogenic sleep he entered in 1967, and he's also Dr. Evil) and has upped the ante by writing his own script, delivers every line with a gentle, toothy, hilarious abandon. And Elizabeth Hurley, as the spy who helps Powers make the transition to the nineties, has a fine, dry way of

setting up Myers's better jokes. The director is Jay Roach.—B.D. (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII. . . ¶ Sutton; through June 5.)

BRASSED OFF—Moviegoers who are dragged against their wills to Mark Herman's study of the effect of brass-band music on a depressed mining community in the north of England may be surprised to find themselves having a good time. Pete Postlethwaite stars as Danny, who runs the band with an iron baton; the miners' main reason to stay in it is the arrival of the bewitching Gloria (Tara Fitzgerald), who has a wicked way with a flugelhorn. She starts seeing Andy (Ewan McGregor, without whom no British film is complete these days), who, to his dismay, discovers that she is working for the people who are planning to shut the pit down. The movie, which is full of such clashes, emerges, to Herman's great credit, not as stiff dialectic but as kindly, flexible farce; only toward the end, disastrously, does the political fury burst out into the open. With Stephen Tompkinson and Jim Carter, each as mournful as the other.—A.L. (5/26/97) (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Square, and New York Twin.)

BREAKDOWN—A well-made if not particularly original highway thriller, starring Kurt Russell as a man whose wife (Kathleen Quinlan) vanishes while they're vacationing in the Southwest. The director, Jonathan Mostow, milks a lot of anxiety out of dusty desert roads and creepy diners, building a fine suspense machine as Russell, in an impressive performance, tracks a menacing trucker (J. T. Walsh) who may be responsible for his wife's disappearance.—B.D. (Astor Plaza, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Waverly.)

CHASING AMY—In Kevin Smith's low-budget comedy, a young comic-book artist (Ben Affleck) falls in love with a pretty, vivacious blonde (Joey Lauren Adams), who is, inconveniently, a lesbian. Smith doesn't have the skill to maintain a pleasurable sense of anticipation for an entire movie; this picture, his third, is as crummy-looking and as sluggishly paced as his debut feature, the 1994 "Clerks."—T.R. (4/7/97) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea West, and Eastside Playhouse.)

FATHERS' DAY—In Ivan Reitman's comedy, Robin Williams and Billy Crystal join forces to look for a missing teen-age boy, each of them believing that the runaway might be his son. The stars work together very gracefully, but the humor is dulled by the Perry Como-ish languor of Reitman's direction and fatally compromised by baby-boomer sentimentality about parenthood. Also with Nastassja Kinski and Julia Louis-Dreyfus.—T.R. (5/19/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, and Orpheum VII.)

THE FIFTH ELEMENT—Loud, garish sci-fi extravaganza written and directed by Luc Besson. The production design is rich and imaginative, the computer-generated images (courtesy of James Cameron's Digital Domain) are amazing, Jean-Paul Gaultier's costumes are truly fabulous, and Bruce Willis's performance, as a cab driver out to save the world, is a small miracle of calm amidst a visual circus—all to no avail. The story is as trite and stupid as that of "StarGate," which at least played up its campiness with a minimum of hysteria. Besson cranks the screaming and the mayhem to ear-splitting levels.—B.D. (Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

FLAMENCO—A documentary-cum-love letter to the wondrously singing, dancing, and guitar playing of the Gypsies of southern Spain. Carlos Saura has gathered dozens of performers and had them do their thing in front of an exquisitely simple white backdrop. He relies on Vittorio Storaro's rich cinematography and, of course, on the inherent passion of the genre to hold our interest, and most of the time they do—though the endless succession of numbers sometimes feels like too much of a good thing.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

GONE FISHIN'—The comic adventures of two buddies (Danny Glover and Joe Pesci) trying to get to the Everglades for a fishing vacation they've won. Directed by Christopher Cain. (86th Street East Twin, Embassy 3, Gotham Cinema, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas.)

IRMA VEP—Olivier Assayas has a good time with the pretensions of French cinema in this mostly charming lampoon of filmmaking. The plot concerns a troubled director (Jean-Pierre Léaud) whose insistence on casting the Hong Kong superstar Maggie Cheung (playing herself) in his remake of the classic French silent "Les Vampires" brings him close to ruin. Assayas dramatizes life on a movie set with some nicely drawn minor characters. Echoes of French films run rampant; the cinematic tricks (handheld cameras, odd sound effects, and so forth) don't always work, but there's some fun to be had here. In French and English.—B.D. (Film Forum 3.)

LIAR LIAR—Tom Shadyac's movie stars Jim Carrey as a lying lawyer whose life is upended when his five-year-old son makes a birthday wish that, for exactly one day, his father will be incapable of telling a lie. As he peels away the layers of venal charm, you wait to discover an even more pungent venality beneath. Instead—guess what—he turns out to be a nice guy, and you feel let down when he finally surrenders to the forces of mush. But it's touching to find a director who believes in all sincerity that jokes about gas and pimples are, and always will be, inherently funny.—A.L. (3/31/97) (First & 62nd Cinemas and National Twin.)

THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK—Steven Spielberg's sequel to his 1993 blockbuster is, at its best, unmistakably the product of a master craftsman, and this time around he has found a way to amuse himself even as he cranks out a kind of movie that he has obviously outgrown. The director, on his return trip to the land of the dinosaurs, largely dispenses with the awestruck solemnity that fossilized his style in the first picture and replaces it with snappy showmanship and a teasing, self-aware tone: he plays on our eagerness to be frightened by his mechanical beasts, and manipulates us so effortlessly that we begin to laugh at how primitive our responses are. He works like a great gagman here, riffing freely on classic adventure motifs (including a literal cliffhanger). The

slapstick action sequences—often parodic and sometimes self-parodic—are exhilarating. With Jeff Goldblum, Julianne Moore, Pete Postlethwaite, Arliss Howard, and Richard Attenborough. Screenplay by David Koepp.—T.R. (6/2/97) (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Olympia, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, and Ziegfeld.)

LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION!—Equal-opportunity mawkishness. Joe Mantello's film version of the 1994 Terrence McNally play—he also directed Off Broadway—hangs onto the Neil Simon-esque structure of a group of gay men spending three summer weekends together at a country house. The group includes a couple of pious yuppies (Stephen Spinella and John Benjamin Hickey), an English meanie (John Glover), a stereotypical Broadway-loving queen (Jason Alexander, surprisingly sympathetic), and a Latin hunk (Randy Becker, who demonstrates that you don't have to be a woman to be reduced to an object of lust).—S.K. (Cinema II, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Village Theatre VII.)

NIGHT FALLS ON MANHATTAN—Yet another movie about New York City police corruption by Sidney Lumet ("Serpico," "Prince of the City," "Q & A"). This one, starring Andy Garcia as a Manhattan D.A. prosecuting a drug king accused of shooting some cops, has the reliable Lumet touches (the blue-and-gray color schemes, the passionate shouting about right and wrong), but it really belongs in a TV lineup. Lumet began his career, in the fifties, as a director of hard-hitting teleplays, and after years of Hollywood moviemaking he appears to have come full circle: the picture is idealistic and moralistic and at the same time hip and cynical, like a good episode of "Law and Order" or "NYPD Blue," only with more cursing.—B.D. (Chelsea West, East 85th Street, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, State, 34th St. East, and Waverly.)

PONETTE—Writer-director Jacques Doillon's story of a four-year-old (Victoire Thivisol) who must come to terms with the sudden death of her mother. In French. (Angelika Film Center, Carnegie Hall Cinemas, and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

PORTLAND—Writer-director Niels Arden Oplev's debut film follows a pair of brothers, both hoods, through Denmark's underworld. In Danish. (Film Forum.)

LA PROMESSE—Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's hard-hitting coming-of-age story stars Jérémie Rénier as Igor, a streetwise Belgian teen-ager who helps his scummy father (Olivier Gourmet) traffic in illegal immigrants. The film starts out as a fascinating if detached cinéma-vérité look at these lowlives; we learn how they trump up the paperwork, cheat the immigrants, and force them to work as slave laborers. Then, about a third of the way through, Igor sees one of his father's hapless African victims fall off a ladder. He promises to protect the dying man's wife and child, and his struggle to uphold his pledge turns into a morality tale permeated with a Dickensian indignation at evil. A risk-taking, original piece of work. In French.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

ROMY AND MICHELE'S HIGH SCHOOL REUNION—Two ditzes (Mira Sorvino and Lisa Kudrow)



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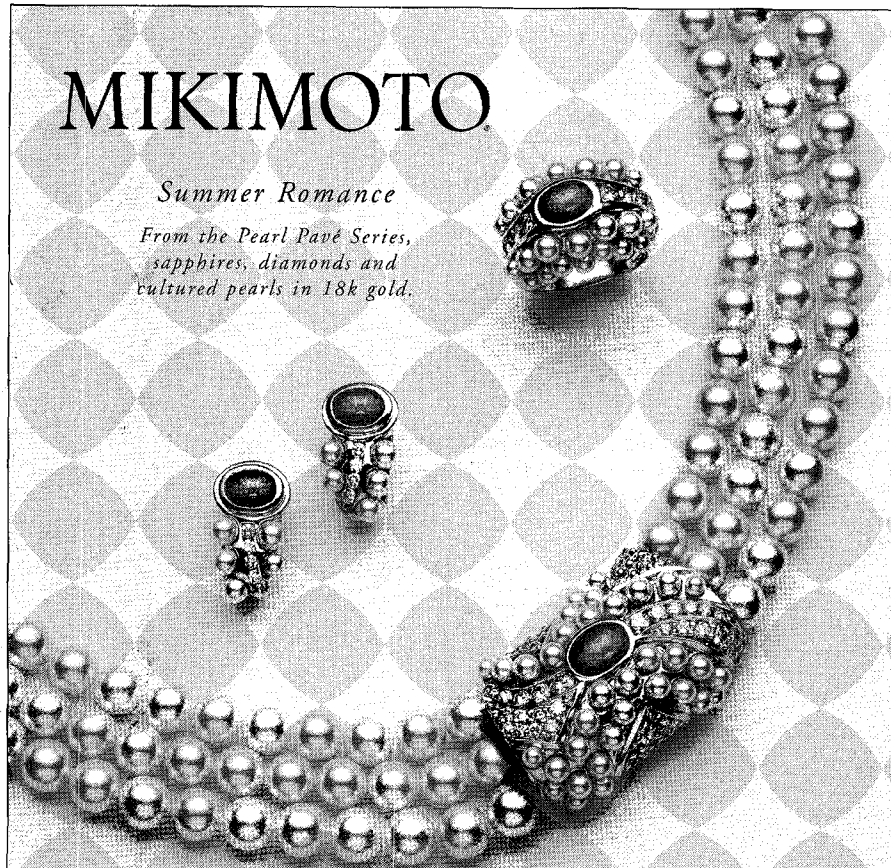
Opening June 6, Vivian Wu in "The Pillow Book."

TIM BOWER

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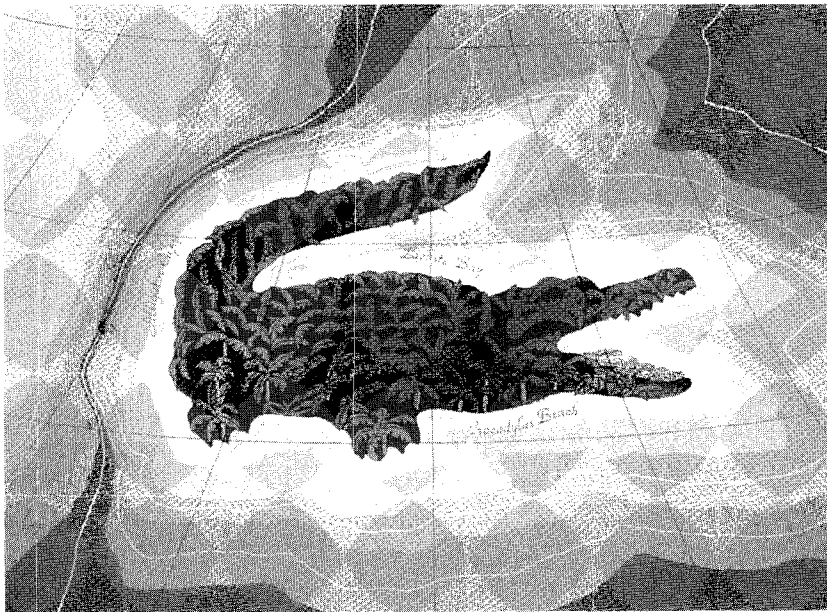
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best friends since childhood, go to their tenth-year high-school reunion determined to prove that they're no longer losers. It's easy to see why someone thought an idiot buddy movie with girls was a fresh idea, but, while the stars are intensely likable, the writing isn't clever enough or daringly stupid enough to produce big laughs. Directed by David Mirkin.—S.K. (86th Street East Twin, Manhattan Twin, and Village East Cinemas.... ¶ Embassy 1; through June 5.)

ROUGH MAGIC—In Clare Peploe's blithe-spirited diversion, a magician's assistant (Bridget Fonda), on the run from her odious fiancé (D. W. Moffet), heads across the border into Mexico; there she hooks up with a mysterious chain-smoking drifter (Russell Crowe) and an elixir-peddling quack (Jim Broadbent), who enlists her in his search for the secret recipe for a potent Indian concoction. The movie's comic-fantastic tone runs the constant risk of becoming merely precious, but Peploe manages to keep the whole thing feeling airy and bizarrely natural. The picture has a kind of playful, bounding quality, hopscotching among the conventions of various genres—film noir, screwball comedy, road movie, fable—apparently just for the joy of purposeless zigzag motion. And the actors—especially Fonda, who is luminously funny—are more than nimble enough for the game. Also with Kenneth Mars, Paul Rodriguez, Euva Anderson, and a talented Jack Russell terrier named Barkley. The screenplay, by Peploe and William Brookfield, is adapted from a 1944 pulp novel by James Hadley Chase.—T.R. (6/2/97) (62nd & Broadway and Village East Cinemas.)

'TIL THERE WAS YOU—A romance about a couple (Jeanne Tripplehorn and Dylan McDermott) who have long been destined to meet. Directed by Scott Winant. Written by Winnie Holzman. (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, Embassy 2, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

TRIAL AND ERROR—In Jonathan Lynn's courtroom farce, an out-of-work actor (Michael Richards) decides to fill in for his friend, a very drunk attorney (Jeff Daniels). Written by Sara Bernstein and Gregory Bernstein. (Cinema I, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE VAN—Adapted by Roddy Doyle from the third novel in his Barrytown Trilogy, this tale of Dublin no-hopers also marks the lonely and melancholic end of the trilogy in the movies. After the joyousness of "The Commitments" and the dirty fun of "The Snapper," the final act is a letdown. Colm Meaney stars as a paunchy idler who joins forces with his friend Bimbo (Donal O'Kelly) to run a new kind of fast-food service: mobile, friendly, frantic, and profoundly unhealthy. Stephen Frears, who directed, works equally hard to serve up the energy and farce of their enterprise, but finally even he is sapped by the plotless pathos of the tale. Though as usual Doyle sets off a display of loud jokes, for once they seem dampened by something close to sentimentality. Music by Eric Clapton; food, at a guess, by the people who made "Swamp Thing."—A.L. (5/26/97) (Angelika Film Center and Regency.... ¶ Sutton; through June 5.)

VOLCANO—Tommy Lee Jones stars as the director of L.A.'s emergency-management team, who is trying to sluice some boiling lava into the sea; in the process he meets a seismologist, perkily played by Anne Heche, who helps explain just what a volcanic eruption is, though mainly she keeps shouting to stand back from the lava flow. The film is poorly written, and it has little suspense (most of the characters, strangely enough, don't get fried) and less humor, but—unlike this year's earlier volcanic blowout, "Dante's Peak"—it has fast, no-nonsense pacing and an impressive number of camera setups. The director, Mick Jackson, keeps the effects moving along, and, the audience may warm to the movie as a good amusement-park ride.—B.D. (National Twin.)

ALSO PLAYING

ABSOLUTE POWER: Worldwide Cinemas. . . **ANNA KARENINA:** 59th Street East Cinema. . . **BOOTY CALL:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . **CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION** (reviewed in our issue of 5/12/97): Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . **CRASH** (3/31/97): Angelika Film Center. . . **THE DAYTRIPPERS** (3/24/97): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Village East Cinemas. . . **THE DESIGNATED MOURNER** (5/19/97): 68th St. Playhouse and Village East Cinemas. . . **DIARY OF A SEDUCER:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . **DONNIE BRASCO** (3/17/97): 64th and 2nd. . . **THE ENGLISH PATIENT** (11/25/96): Guild and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . **FEMALE PERVERSION:** Quad Cinema. . . **GROSSE POINTE BLANK** (4/21/97): Village Theatre VII. . . **JERRY MAGUIRE** (12/16/96): Worldwide Cinemas. . . **KAMA SUTRA:** Angelika 57. . . **KOLYA:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and The Screening Room. . . **LOVE JONES:** Criterion Center. . . **MONDO:** Quad Cinema. . . **MURDER AT 1600:** Criterion Center. . . **NOWHERE:** Quad Cinema. . . **PRIVATE PARTS:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . **SECRETS & LIES:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . **SELENA:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . **SPRUNG:** Criterion Center. . . **WHEN WE WERE KINGS** (2/17/97): The Screening Room.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th St.
ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at Broadway.
BECKMAN, Second Ave. at 66th St.
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
CHELSEA WEST, 333 W. 23rd St.
CINEMA I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th St.
CORONET CINEMAS, Third Ave. at 59th St.
CRITERION CENTER, Broadway at 44th St.
EAST 85TH STREET, First Ave. at 85th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, Broadway at 84th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, Third Ave. at 86th St.
EMBASSY I, Broadway at 46th St.
EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
FILM FORUM, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GOTHAM CINEMA, Third Ave. at 58th St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.
MANHATTAN TWIN, Third Ave. at 59th St.
METRO CINEMA I AND 2, Broadway at 99th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
NATIONAL TWIN, Broadway at 44th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, Broadway at 19th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, Broadway at 107th St.
ORPHEUM VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
REGENCY, Broadway at 67th St.
THE SCREENING ROOM, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
64TH AND 2ND, Second Ave. at 64th St.
68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 68th St.
72ND STREET EAST, Third Ave. at 71st St.
STATE, Broadway at 45th St.
SUTTON I AND 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, Second Ave. at 12th St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
WAVERLY I AND 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

ARIA (1988)—The producer, Don Boyd, asked ten directors to select operatic arias and film an interpretation of the music independent of the plot. John Hurt, wandering in an opera cloak through the locales of the various segments, is supposed to knit it all together, but the picture quickly unravels. The filmmakers cut the melodies down to mood music, the lyrics to the equivalent of comic-book thought bubbles; there's a lot of naked flesh but little naked emotion. The funniest entry is Julien Temple's riff on "Rigoletto," with Buck Henry as a movie producer, Anita Morris as his wife, and Beverly D'Angelo as an ambitious starlet; they all end up at the Madonna Inn, in San Luis Obispo. The most chillingly effective (if assaultive) is Ken Russell's take on "Nessun dorma," a mix of black magic, torture, car crash, and surgery which suggests J. G. Ballard. The other directors are Jean-Luc Godard, Robert Altman, Bruce Beresford, Derek Jarman, Franc Roddam (who films Bridget Fonda in a Las Vegas "Liebestod"), Charles Sturridge, Bill Bryden (who did the Hurt vignettes), and Nicolas Roeg (who, perversely, cast his wife, Theresa Russell, as King Zog of Albania in a fantasia on "Un Ballo in Maschera").—M.S. (Florence Gould Hall; June 10.)

BULLET IN THE HEAD (1990)—In John Woo's tale of damnation without redemption, three friends from Hong Kong try to get rich in the anything-goes chaos of Saigon in 1967, only to wind up riven by war and by simple greed. Although Woo based one image—a peace demonstrator trying to face down a tank—on the student protests in Tiananmen Square, the ambience of decay and the descent-into-hell narrative derive mostly from "The Deer Hunter," with a touch of Peckinpah's "Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia" thrown in. The bloodletting in the first hour is genuinely upsetting; then the picture degenerates into a prolonged masochistic frenzy. Tony Leung is the loyal and upright hero, but Simon Yam, as a Eurasian gun-for-hire, steals the escapist set piece, a shoot-out in a night club, with his mixture of competence and insouciance. As in "The Deer Hunter," macho fantasy infects the political tragedy. And the film demonstrates that even Asians can view wartime Vietnam as the heart of darkness. With Waise Lee, Jacky Cheung, and Yolinda Yam. In Cantonese.—M.S. (Brooklyn Museum of Art; June 7-8.)

FRANK AND OLLIE (1995)—This affectionate dual profile of the Disney animation artists Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston illuminates the early history of big-screen cartoons, demonstrating their link to the even earlier and more honored tradition of silent comedy. Frank and Ollie, two of the "nine old men" responsible for Disney heirlooms from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" and "Pinocchio" to "The Jungle Book," cite Chaplin's "City Lights" in particular for showing them how pathos and emotion could sustain and heighten humor. This documentary was directed by Frank's son, Theodore, who has described it as a "cafeteria" offering a two-man biography, a chronicle of an art form, and a salute to Disney's pioneer era; it has a jolly ambience and a rallying soul. The interplay of the analytic Frank and the intuitive Ollie, and their account of Walt Disney at his zenith, conjure up the esprit de corps of Hollywood in its heyday: while the Disney team was making "Bambi" at RKO, for example, Orson Welles and his Mercury Theatre were there making "Citizen Kane."—M.S. (Anthology Film Archives; June 6 and June 8.)

FUNNY FACE (1957)—Fred Astaire as an Avedonish photographer who discovers Audrey Hepburn working in a bookshop and takes her to Paris to model clothes for a *Vogue*-like magazine. The George and Ira Gershwin score has some of the fresh sprightliness it must have had when it served the original "Funny Face" on Broadway thirty years before. This big

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Stanley Donen musical isn't all it should be, though. The movie emphasizes Astaire's age by trying to ignore it, and it's a sour idea to use a Sartre-like thinker (Michel Auclair) as the villain; Hepburn's rescue from European sex-mad intellectualism by clean-minded, all-American-boy Astaire is so cheap and false a plot development that the picture's sophistication sinks into a very unphotogenic miasma. Still, Hepburn is a charming sidekick for Astaire, and the satirist Kay Thompson is agreeable as the rangy, hardboiled fashion editor.—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; June 8.)

HAMLET (1990)—Franco Zeffirelli gives Shakespeare's tragedy the ripping-yarns treatment: a dashing star (Mel Gibson); lavish sets and costumes; a generous amount of swordplay and leaping about; and just enough text to enable the audience to follow the story. Zeffirelli and his co-screenwriter, Christopher De Vore, have cut the play to an acceptable prestige-picture running time of two hours and fifteen minutes; you get the feeling that they would have eliminated Hamlet's tortured, action-retarding soliloquies if they could have done so without losing all those famous lines.—T.R. (Museum of Modern Art; June 8.)

LONG PANTS (1927)—This Harry Langdon comedy, directed by Frank Capra, wasn't up to "The Strong Man" of the year before; it has its dull side, but it has some inventive moments. Langdon, with his ineffectual, fluttering gestures, is a creepy mixture of the infantile and the effete. He isn't funny, exactly—he's fixating. Here, he plays a meek small-town adolescent who yearns for romance; he leaves his family and the girl next door and follows a vamp (Alma Bennett) to the city. (She turns out to be nothing less than a murderer.) Silent.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; June 9.)

LOST HORIZON (1937)—The original version of the James Hilton novel, directed by Frank Capra, part popular adventure and part prissy, high-flown cracker-barrel sentimentality. The early trip through the icy waste is exciting, and Ronald Colman speaks in his charmingly cadenced manner, but Shangri-La, the genteel Himalayan utopia of peace, health, and eternal life, resembles, as Graham Greene pointed out, a film star's luxurious estate in Beverly Hills.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; June 6-8.)

THE MAN WHO LAUGHS (1928)—No one who saw this silent movie as a child is likely to have forgotten it. The Victor Hugo story is about fairly conventional seventeenth-century English court intrigues, except for one detail about the hero, Gwynplaine (Conrad Veidt). The heir to an earldom, he was kidnapped as a child and, at the orders of the king, a political enemy of his father, he was mutilated—his face carved into a perpetual grin. He had no choice but to become a clown. The German-born director Paul Leni had a true gift for macabre décor, and the film's ambitious mixture of morbidity and historical melodrama is very effective, even with its heavy sentimentality.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; June 8.)

RICHARD III (1956)—Laurence Olivier makes Shakespeare's "son of hell" such a magnetic, chilling, amusing monster that the villainy arouses an almost immoral delight. As director and star, Olivier succeeds with the soliloquies as neither he nor anyone else ever did on film before; they're intimate yet brazen. If the film were all malevolent crookback Richard, it would be a marvel; unfortunately, he was plagued with quantities of associates and relations, and even when impersonated by Ralph Richardson, John Gielgud, Cedric Hardwicke, etc., they're a dull lot. But none of this matters very much when you can watch Olivier's lewd courtship of Claire Bloom and hear the inflections he gives lines like "I am not in the giving vein today."—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; June 6 and June 8.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

FILM FORUM 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—A retrospective of films directed by Frank Capra. June 4: "The Younger Generation" (1929), "The Way of the Strong" (1928; silent), and "Fulah Fisher's Boarding House" (1922; silent). June 5: "Riding High" (1950) and "Here Comes the Groom" (1951). June 6-8: "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946) and "Lost Horizon" (†). June 9: "Long Pants" (†), "His First Flame" (1927; silent), and "Saturday Afternoon" (1926; silent). June 10: Television documenta-



At Anthology Film Archives, "Frank and Ollie."

ries—"Our Mr. Sun" (1956), "Hemo the Magnificent" (1957), "The Strange Case of the Cosmic Rays" (1957), and "The Unchained Goddess" (1958).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films directed by or about Howard Hawks. June 5 at 2:30: "Fig Leaves" (1926; silent). June 5 at 6: "Tiger Shark" (1932). June 6 at 2:30: "The Cradle Snatchers" (1927; silent) and "Howard Hawks: American Artist" (1977, Kevin Macdonald), a documentary. June 6 at 6 and June 8 at 5: "Only Angels Have Wings" (1939). June 6 at 8:15: "Scarface" (1932). June 7 at 2 and June 10 at 2:30: "The Big Sky" (1952). June 7 at 5 and June 9 at 2:30: "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953). June 8 at 2: "The Big Sleep" (1945). June 9 at 6: "Red River" (1948). June 5 at 3 and 6: "The Lion of Gaza" (1996, Per Holmquist and Suzanne Khardalian), a documentary. June 5 at 8: "King Lear" (1970, Grigori Kozintsev; in Russian). June 6 at 2:30 and June 8 at 5: "Richard III" (†). June 6 at 6: "Looking for Richard" (1996, Al Pacino). June 7 at 1 and June 10 at 6: "Hamlet" (1976, Celestino Coronado). June 7 at 2:30: "Henry V" (1944, Laurence Olivier). June 7 at 5:15: "Julius Caesar" (1953, Joseph L. Mankiewicz). June 8 at 1 and June 10 at 6: "The Taming of the Shrew" (1929, Sam Taylor). June 8 at 2:30: "Hamlet" (†). June 9 at 3: "Macbeth" (1948, Orson Welles). June 9 at 6 and June 10 at 3: "Macbeth" (1960, George Schaefer). June 6 at 8:15: "Mr. Denning Drives North" (1951, Anthony Kimmins).

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Films directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

June 4 at 2 and 6:15 and June 5 at 4:15 and 9: "Veronika Voss" (1982). June 4 at 4 and 8:15 and June 5 at 2: "Lola" (1981). June 5 at 6:30: "Floating" (1996, William Roth). June 5 at 8:30: "The 1997 Human Rights Watch International Film Festival. June 6 at 2, June 9 at 6:15, and June 10 at 8:45: "An Act of Conscience" (1997, Robbie Leppzer; United States). June 6 at 4 and June 8 at 8:15: "Paper Heads" (1995, Dusan Hanak; Slovakia). June 6 at 6 and June 8 at 2: "Waco: The Rules of Engagement" (1996, William Gazecki; United States). June 6 at 9:15, June 7 at 6:30, and June 9 at 2: "Devils Don't Dream" (1996, Andreas Hoessli; Switzerland). June 7 at 2, June 8 at 6, and June 10 at 2: "Barizogon" (1996, Fumiki Watanabe; Japan). June 7 and June 10 at 4:15: "Ricardo, Miriam and Fidel" (1996, Christian Frei; Switzerland). June 7 at 9, June 9 at 4, and June 10 at 6:15: "A Song for Beke" (1992, Nizamettin Aric; Germany). June 9 at 8:30: "It Ain't Love" (1997, Susan Todd and Andrew Young; United States).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—June 10 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Aria" (†).

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of silent films with their original recorded orchestral scores. June 7 at 2: "The River Pirate" (1929, William K. Howard). June 7 at 4: "Don Juan" (1926, Alan Crossland). June 8 at 2: "West of Zanzibar" (1928, Tod Browning). June 8 at 4: "The Man Who Laughs" (†).

SYMPHONY SPACE, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—A series of musical films, each preceded by a short cabaret performance featuring the music of the film's composer and lyricist. June 10 at 7:30: Jennifer Prescott will sing songs by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, followed by a screening of "Carousel" (1956, Henry King).

A DIFFERENT LIGHT BOOKSTORE, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On June 8 at 7, the feature will be "Funny Face" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363)—"The Harder They Come" (1973, Perry Henzell), with Jimmy Cliff.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—June 4-5 at 8:20, June 6 at 6, June 7 at 5, June 8 at 9:15, June 9 at 6, and June 10 at 7:15: "Chronicle of a Disappearance" (1996, Elia Suleiman; in Arabic). June 6 at 7, June 7 at 3, and June 8 at 9: "The Ride" (1995, Jan Sverak; in Czech). June 6 at 9:30 and June 8 at 3: "Frank and Ollie" (†). June 7 at 6: "Crisis" (1928, G. W. Pabst; silent). June 7 at 9: "Pretty Village, Pretty Flame" (1996, Srdjan Dragojevic; in Serbian). June 8 at 6: "The Day a Pig Fell into the Well" (1996, Hong Sang-Soo; in Korean). June 9 at 7: "Red Hollywood" (1996, Thom Andersen and Noel Burch). June 9 at 9:30: "Chantal Akerman par Chantal Akerman" (1996, Akerman). June 10 at 7: "The Killer's Mother" (1996, Volker Einrauch; in German). June 10 at 9:30: "Memories of Frankenstein" (1996, Jonas Mekas).

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART, Eastern Parkway. (718-638-5000, ext. 230)—A program of action films made in Hong Kong. June 7 at 3 and 7 and June 8 at 3: "Bullet in the Head" (†).

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008, ext. 347)—A program of films inspired by actual and fictional memoirs. June 7 at 1: "The Diary of a Country Priest" (1950, Robert Bresson; in French). June 7 at 3:15: "Lolita" (1962, Stanley Kubrick).

THE NINTH ANNUAL NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL—June 5-15: Films and videos from around the world will be shown at the Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St., and at the New York Film Academy, 100 E. 17th St. (For information about tickets, call 254-8504.)

MARCELLUS HALL

The career is a dream. The pens are from Cross.

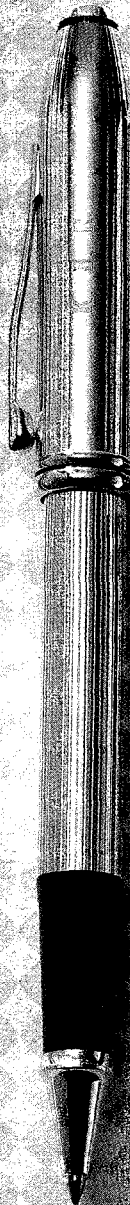
1987

Graduation gift from parents, who hoped it would be used for writing resume. Actually used to keep journal of travels through Europe.



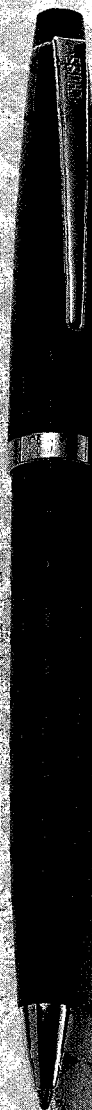
1988

Gift from girlfriend, to celebrate first job. Used to write her a Dear John letter after discovering initials belonged to another boyfriend.



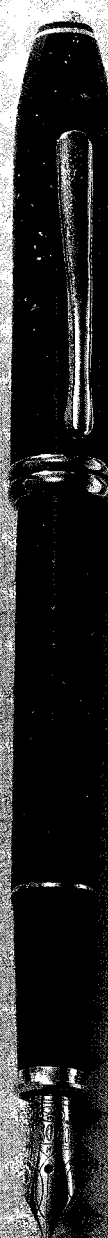
1991

Gift from co-workers to celebrate leaving and starting own company. Used to sign away house, car and retirement account as collateral for bank loan.



1993

Bought to draw up first multi-million dollar deal, which put company on industry "top ten to watch" list. Also used to write check paying off bank loan.

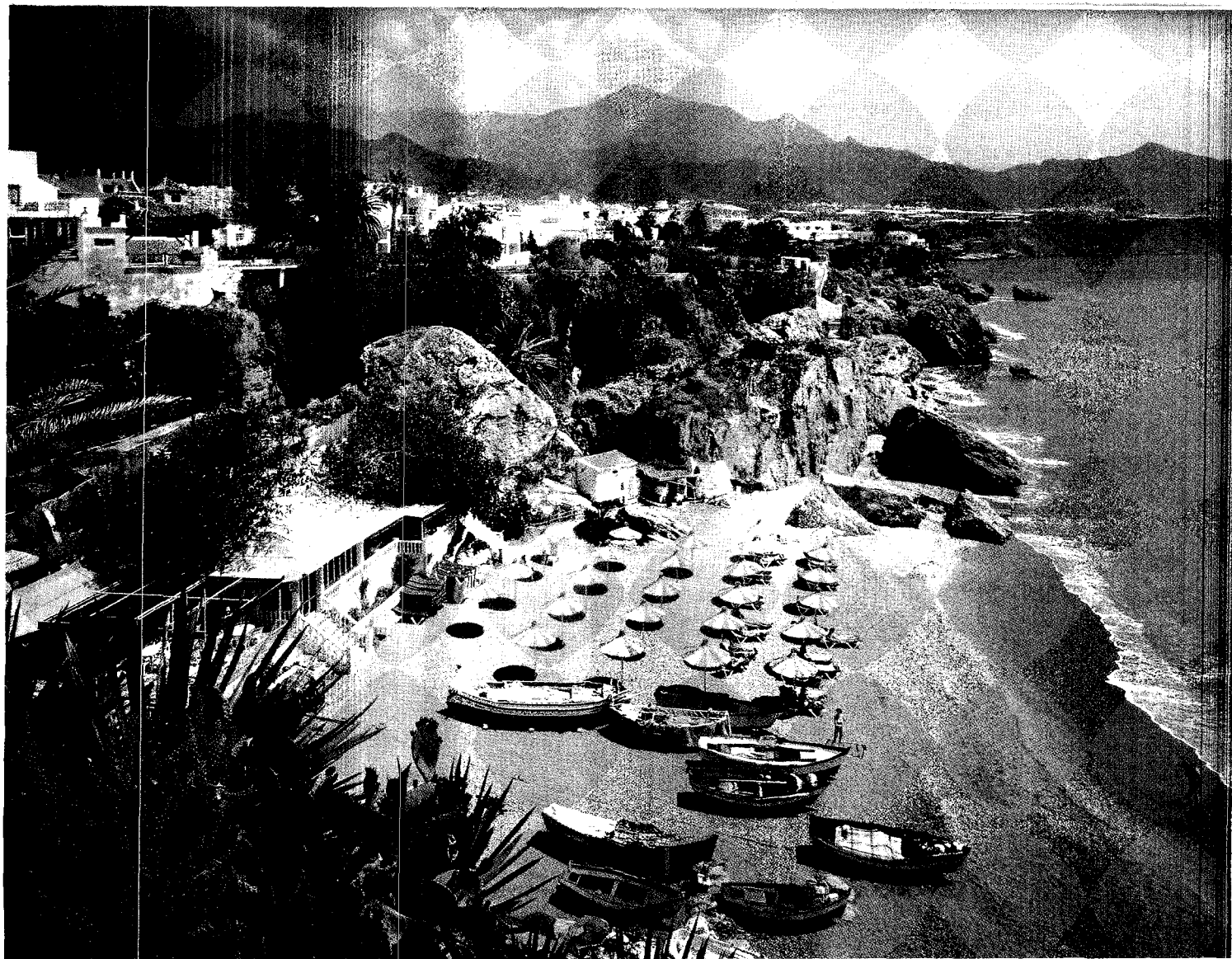


1996

Gift from employees to celebrate early retirement after IPO raised twenty-five million dollars. Used to keep journal through Europe.



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE BENCH

The unsolved mystery behind a McVeigh defense tactic.



IN the closing days of the Oklahoma City bombing trial in Denver last week, Timothy McVeigh's defense attorney Stephen Jones brought out a startling detail that seemed rooted in an Edgar Allan Poe story rather than in a modern criminal investigation. A medical examiner testified that, despite the mammoth recovery effort in the wreckage of the Alfred P. Murrah Building, no one had been able to identify the body to which a sixteen-inch portion of left leg belonged.

The leg, it turned out, had a macabre history. In the first days after the bombing, on April 19, 1995, another leg was discovered in the rubble. But, after being footprinted and subjected to DNA tests, that limb was matched to a woman named Lakesha Levy, a victim of the bombing who had been buried, with a different left leg, in New Orleans. Last year, Levy's body was exhumed, and the leg in her coffin was exchanged for the one that belonged to her. Levy had been embalmed, which rendered DNA tests useless, so the leg that officials removed from her coffin could not be scientifically matched to any of the other victims. In its closing argument, the defense asserted that the unidentified—and untestable—leg belonged to the real perpetrator of the bombing, who had, Jones theorized, otherwise vaporized in the explosion. The prosecutor Scott Mendeloff dismissed this as mere speculation—a “wacky theory.”

For most people following the trial, the story of the leg was just a grim mystery, but for one spectator in Judge Richard Matsch's courtroom the issue demonstrated the human cost of fancy legal

argument. Dan McKinney is a forty-five-year-old retired radar builder for the F.A.A. His wife, Linda, who was an office manager for the Secret Service, died in the blast. (His niece, Shelly Turner Bland, was also killed.) McKinney waited twelve days before Linda's body was recovered. “They brought me her jewelry and her personal effects,” he said during a break in the testimony last week. “But I chose not to identify her body because that wasn't how I wanted to remember her.”

A few months ago, however, McKinney's mother-in-law received a phone call from the F.B.I. “They said they had a missing leg, and it might be Linda's,” he said. McKinney has a bushy mustache and a face that creases easily with laughter, but these days he could pass for an old man. “This year has been even worse than last year,” he said. “I guess it's just that reality has set in.”

After the F.B.I.'s call, McKinney got back in touch with Frederick Jordan, the chief medical examiner in Oklahoma City, who suggested that McKinney should come in. “They showed me pictures of Linda,” he said softly. “That was a big mistake. Now I'm going to have to carry that image around with me for the rest of my life.” Did he think the leg was hers? “In the picture, you can't tell if her leg is there or not. I just don't know.”

The authorities explained that further study might be able to match the leg to his wife, and they gently raised the possibility of exhuming her body, so that if the leg was hers it could be placed in her coffin. Her widower firmly rejected that option, feeling that he and his family had been through enough. “Linda's been laid to rest,” McKinney said, “and that's the way she'll stay.”

That's just as well. Last week, a spokesman for the medical examiner said that the leg remained unidentified, and that it was now doubtful that it belonged to Linda McKinney. Whether

or not the jury was swayed by Jones's argument, the story of the leg is one mystery that won't be resolved by any verdict. —JEFFREY TOOBIN

RAG TRADE

Seventh Avenue's new beauty regime: a lube job for the face.

ARE you going to walk down the street with grease on your face this summer? It's not completely out of the question. For the past few seasons, fashion models have been slithering down runways looking aggressively greasy, as if they'd been standing over a very hot griddle frying bacon, a shiny film of slippery grease all over their faces. The greasy look is a variant of the heroin-chic look. Heroin chic is, of course, now passé (as the President himself announced a few weeks ago), but greasy-faced young women continue to show up in advertisements for designers like Jil Sander, Prada, and Versace. A current Calvin Klein ad shows Kate Moss, in a cheerful yellow sundress, swabbed head to toe with oil.

Only yesterday, it seems, many women were still fairly obsessed with powdering their noses. All right, then: the runways, the fashion magazines . . . But will real

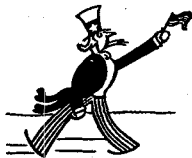


AROUND WASHINGTON

The price of talking the talk inside the Beltway.

WASHINGTON is a city with a language all its own—a jargon-studded dialect that contributes mightily to the view of most Americans that their capital is a foreign country, if not another planet. In Washington, “appropriate” is used mainly as a verb; “baselines” have nothing to do with basketball; “cola” refers not to Coke or Pepsi but to a cost-of-living adjustment; and terms like “rescission” and “sequestration” are tossed around lightly, even though nobody is sure what they mean.

Among the political class, speaking this tongue usually goes smoothly enough, but every now and then English intrudes, and idiomatic chaos ensues. Not long ago, a group of White House staff people began holding regular brainstorming sessions about what President Clinton might say, in a June 14th commencement speech at the University of California at San Diego, about healing racial divisions (or, to use a different but no less grating form of jargon, “repair the breach”) in this country. The



deep-think sessions, which were held in the Roosevelt Room, were advertised inside the White House as “reconciliation meetings”—and that is where the trouble started.

In the argot of Capitol Hill, “reconciliation” is a term of art for those catch-all economic packages which Congress sometimes passes when it’s pretending to put the nation’s fiscal house in order (packages that can be achieved only after a series of legislative “crosswalks,” which means . . . never mind). And so it was that many Clintonites naturally assumed that the reconciliation at issue in the Roosevelt Room wasn’t between blacks and whites but between taxing and spending. In short order, the sessions were rechristened “reconciliation-slash-unity” meetings—thus putting an end to an episode suggesting that, however the President fares at bringing the races together and balancing the budget, one breach that he’s plainly failed to repair is the one between Washington and Webster’s. —JOHN HEILEMANN

women actually grease their faces? We asked the experts at *Vogue*:

What do you think about the new greasy look?

VOGUE, OLD GUARD (woman with pronounced fashion drawl, Diana Vreeland-like authority): The word is not right. “Polish” is the word they’re using. Not “grease.” *Polish*. Call Helena Christensen and ask her what she does with her Vaseline. A chanteuse once had a beauty regime—Dionne Warwick or Lena Horne, it’s one or the other—one day of the week she bathes herself in Vaseline petroleum jelly. I’ve heard Marilyn favored petroleum jelly. (Pause) And shine works with, you know, sleeveless, strapless—obviously, not on a nice angora sweater. Think of the shiny look this way: with a halter dress, good for an evening in Cuernavaca—poolside, margaritas, Fernando Lamas—am I taking you there?

She paused again. There was a telephone click, a hush, and then a younger,

more earnest *Vogue* authority introduced herself: the New Guard.

Are regular women going to put grease on their faces and bodies this summer?

VOGUE, NEW GUARD: In fashion sitings, matte is definitely out. You have to see the skin: dewy, shiny, translucent. But out in the world they still want shine-free. They want it matte. It makes them look old, though. It’s a mistake.

So how do you achieve the greasy look? Use Crisco?

VOGUE N.G.: No. No. Nars. [That’s greasy-look merchandising: Nars sticks, at thirty-two dollars apiece, are more dewy than shiny-greasy, but the colors have nice names: Copacabana, Malibu, Waikiki.]

Do you put it all over your face?

VOGUE N.G.: I don’t see why you’d smear it all over your face. For a picture, you might put Vaseline all over your face. If you want to look really oily, get baby oil—that’s the way to go. But not for street life. Not if you care about your

clothes. Me, I powder my nose, my chin. I think it looks better.

At Cosmetics Plus, an optimistic woman named Ronnie Sue, from South Brooklyn, wasn’t scared of the greasy look at all. “All you need is a heavy cream,” she said, and took a jar off the shelf. “If I put this on my skin, I would shine—I’d be in style.” —ALISON ROSE

THIS CHANGING WORLD

The trouble Rosie O’Donnell’s brick wall has seen.

ON October 20, 1981, in a bizarre coda to the radical lunacy of the sixties, a loose confederacy of heavily armed fugitives and fringe remnants of the Weather Underground, the Black Liberation Army, the Black Panthers, and the May 19th Coalition went to the mall in suburban Nanuet, New York. There the group—thought to be seven men and four women, one of them the notorious Kathy Boudin—ambushed a Brink’s armored truck, killing one of the guards. Then they reached into the truck and grabbed more



than one and a half million dollars. They had code-named their heist the Big Dance.

Fleeing eastward, they shot and killed two policemen from nearby Nyack who had set up a roadblock. In a detail that would seem too baldly emblematic for even the worst television script, one of the cops was black, named Brown. The other was white, named O’Grady. Careering wildly over narrow, hilly roads, the fugitives made a precipitous, high-speed descent toward the Hudson River. One of the getaway cars, a beige Honda Accord, came to a crashing halt with its front end embedded in a masonry wall on North Broadway, the prettiest residential street

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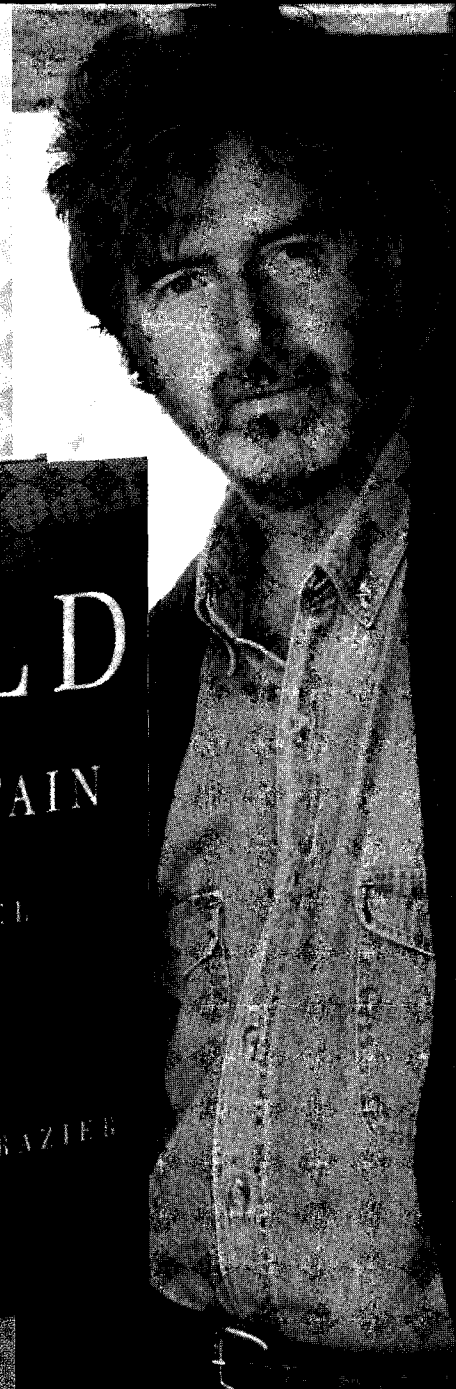
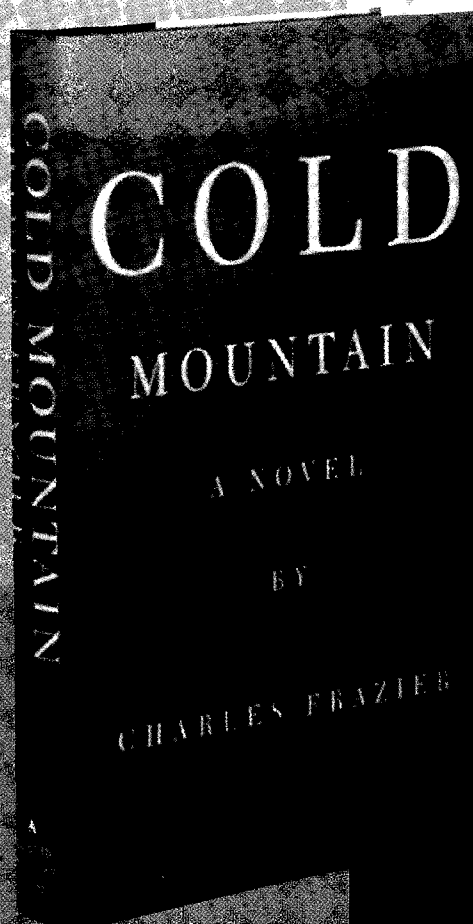
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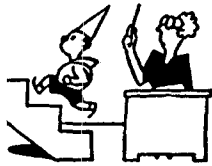


Author photograph by Marion Ettlinger

in the pretty little village of Nyack. The occupants of the wrecked Honda were apprehended, along with their guns and eight hundred thousand dollars. The wall that stopped them belonged to the house just south of the house of the actress Helen Hayes. The Hayes house was purchased last year by the daytime talk-show star and recent Tony Awards m.c. Rosie O'Donnell, who annexed half the neighboring property, including that segment of the wall. Raised and refurbished, the wall now protects a newly erected private playground belonging to Parker O'Donnell, age two. With his mother, he graces the cover of the current issue of *Good Housekeeping*. A cover kid for the nineties, the famously adopted child of a famous single mom, he plays on a swing set that marks the spot where the end of one road intersects the middle of another. —PAUL BOCHNER

CLASS NOTES

Bye, birds and bees. The future of sex ed is a hard-boiled egg.



FIRST—there's simply no way around this fact—sex. Then, nine months plus about fourteen years later, sex education—four months' worth, segueing into Egg Week. And, finally, if you're caring and careful, pizza.

"This is your baby. Good luck," says Elaine Schwartz, the founder and director of the Center School, a public middle school on West Seventieth Street, at the beginning of Egg Week, a life-and-death baby-care simulation with rules that are both less flexible and less forbidding than the real thing. To play, you have to be an eighth grader and a fresh veteran of the sex-education curriculum, the culmination of which is the moment when Mrs. Schwartz gives you a taste of parenting by putting you in charge of a hard-boiled egg on which she's written your initials.

Other distinctly more high-tech options exist to teach kids that parenthood isn't so easy—Baby Think It Over, the incredibly lifelike two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar computerized doll that some schools use, for instance, or the Japanese virtual pet called the Tamagotchi—but Mrs. Schwartz prefers the unambiguous protocols of Egg Week. Wherever you



go, the egg/baby goes, too, except at night, when it's O.K. to stick it in the fridge and pretend it can get by until morning without a diaper change or a feeding. The rest of Mrs. Schwartz's laws: if the egg cracks, it's dead; if you forget to bring it to school, it's dead; if you remember to bring it to school but then leave it unattended without designating a babysitter—dead; if the babysitter drops it, bummer. If the egg survives an entire week intact, Mrs. Schwartz takes you out for pizza, though the budget is such that, if enough mommies and daddies mess up, Chinese is a possibility.

Mrs. Schwartz, who has three grown children and two grandchildren, possesses a demeanor that includes equal measures of cheerful I've-seen-everythingness and unsentimental candor. A typical introduction from Mrs. Schwartz: "This is Desiree. Desiree's egg died the first day." Or: "Garth. Dead egg. He left it in the refrigerator on a shelf too close to the freezer, and it cracked. It's not the refrigerator's fault. A cracked egg is a dead egg."



Last week, as the death toll mounted—with one day to go, only twenty-two of forty-five eggs survived—it became easy to pick out the kids who weren't taking Egg Week seriously. They were the ones who, when they heard that a classmate's egg had died, offered soothing salutations along the lines of "Yo, murderer, 'sup?" During Egg Week lunch hours, the audiovisual storage closet was designated the "nursery." At one o'clock, Mrs. Schwartz unlocked the closet and students picked up their babies, most of which were transported in well-cushioned Tupperware tubs. Also, bereaved and not so bereaved parents wandered in.

TIM MULFORD: "How many eggs left?"

MRS. SCHWARTZ: "Not Tim Mulford's."

Garth Johnston, the author of a confidently logical essay about how he started his own religion, named his egg God, Jr. During their time together—two days—God, Jr., got a stovetop steambath. "I gave it a steambath because it really smelled and I didn't think boiling it some more would solve the problem," Garth said. "Then I sprayed it with my sister's Fuzzy Peach perfume. But don't write that down, because she'll kill me if she finds out. Actually, go ahead, she'll kill me anyway. Also, please note that God, Jr., had no gender. I didn't want to confine it that way. And then it went on to its next level—to a better place, the kingdom of eggdom." —MARK SINGER

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historian could explain the arcane history of the shirt
as it is known today. And there is a good reason: As far
back as Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty, man began to
wear the first vestiges of a shirt, known as a tunic. A
classic example of form following function, the purpose
of the early shirt was to form a protective layer
between a man's skin and his clothing. • By the time
the Middle Ages came to a close, the exposed upper
front portion of the tunic began to be viewed as
decorative or fashionable. As its evolution progressed,
the shirt became the single most important garment
for establishing a man's wealth and social standing.
Hence, the distinction held even today between white
and blue "collar" workers. • Perhaps because it began
as underwear rather than outerwear, the shirt has
changed surprisingly little in the way it is made. But
while the shape and construction is basically the same,
collar design aside, the contemporary shirt is light-years
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to say nothing of price. (continued)

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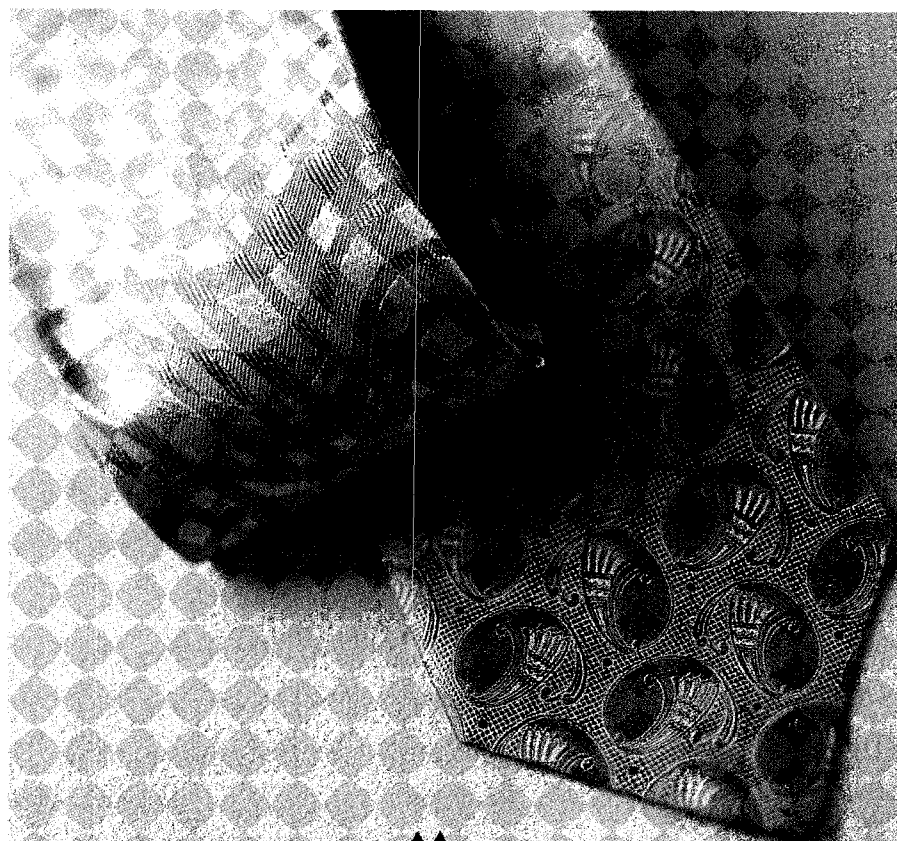
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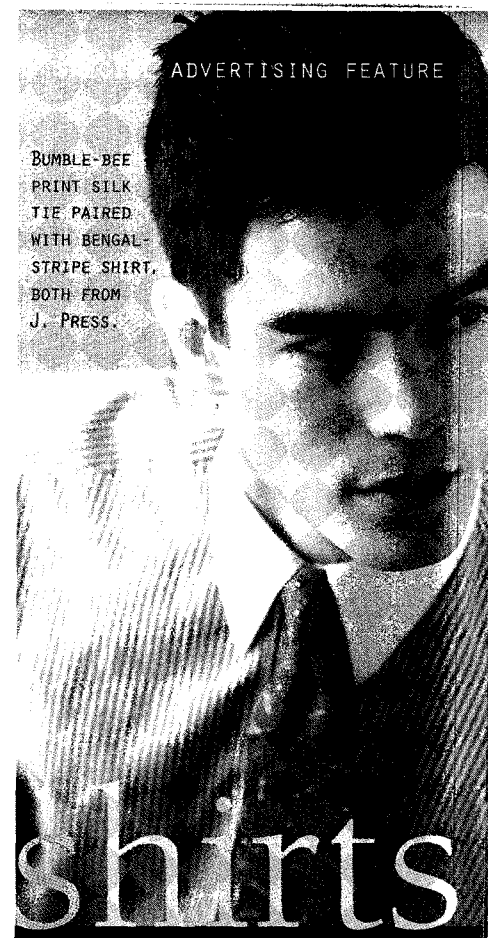


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Dress shirts have entered the fashion spotlight in recent seasons, emphasized by menswear designers on both sides of the Atlantic. Dark-toned dress shirts and imaginatively colored and patterned ties sans jackets have emerged on runways both in Milan and New York. The point: A great fitting colored dress shirt is a statement in and of itself.

On the cutting edge of dress shirt styling is Ascot Chang. Primarily a custom shirtmaker operating its own New York salon on Fifty-seventh Street, Ascot Chang can cut virtually any collar style. Since it stocks a wealth of European fabrics, its custom and ready-made dress shirt and neckwear offerings are intriguing and progressive.

Few American menswear designers rival the innovation of Bert Pulitzer, design director of XMI, who has developed a dress shirt construction that is unlike any seen before. There are no seams across the back or at the shoulders. The result is an incredibly drapery shirt that is clean across the front and has a deep, inverted pleat in the center of the back. Add horizontal buttonholes and deep tones in a cotton-twill weave and you have XMI's newest take on an American menswear classic.

Brioni, the Rome-based clothing maker has a new line of dress shirts and ties that is fast becoming one of the more prominent lines in stores such as Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman, and Saks Fifth Avenue. Hand finished, with single-needle tailoring throughout, Brioni dress shirts are made from exclusive Swiss fabrics, including sheer cotton voile, royal oxford, and piqué to name a few.

One of the more colorful salons in the elegant new Harrison James store on Fifty-fourth Street



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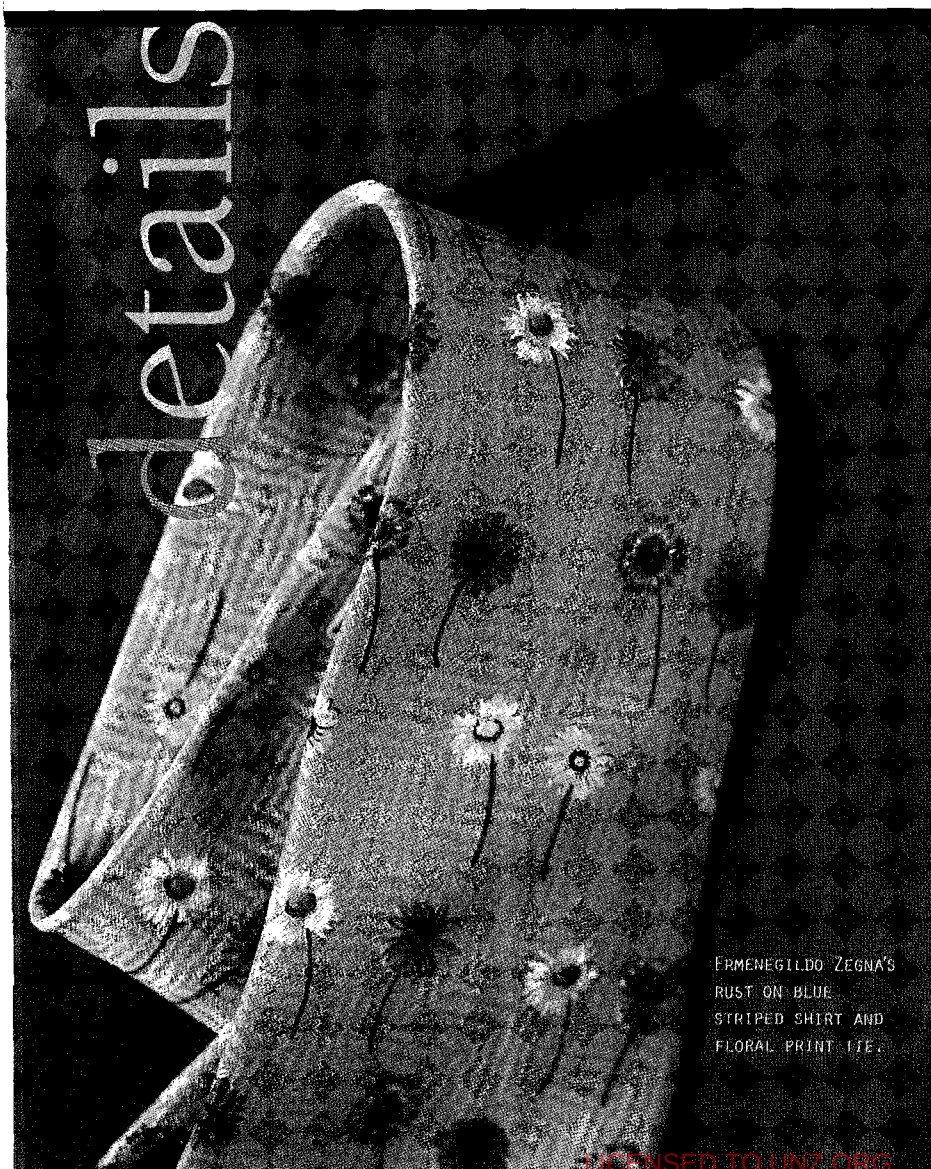
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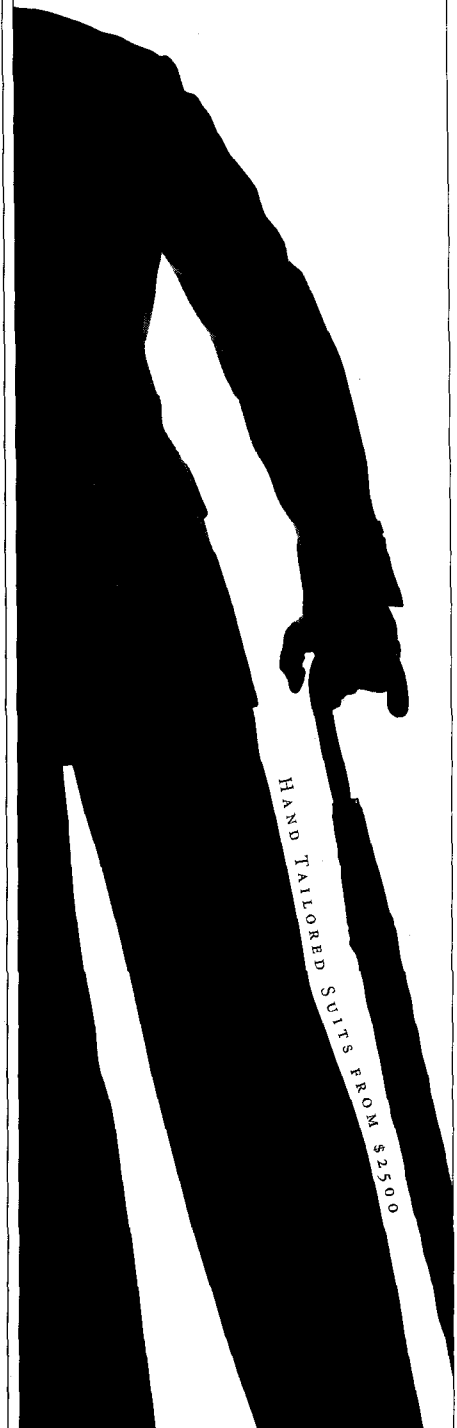
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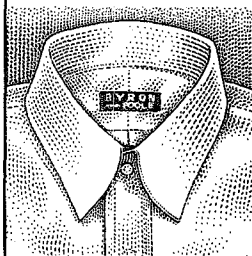
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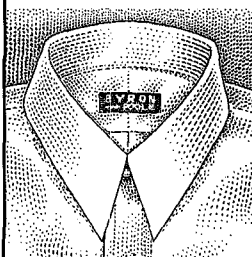
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in New York is the fourth floor haberdashery room. An abundant assortment of richly colored dress shirts in discreet stripings and checks, along with a select range of woven and printed silk neckwear are all handmade in Italy to Harrison James' standards. The store has established a very definite style and point of view, and the furnishings reflect its highly sophisticated taste.

If club ties or classic button-downs with the proper "roll" to the collar in all manner of stripings are one's preference, it is reassuring to know that bastions of traditionalism such as J. Press still exist. J. Press also stocks elegant, international looks such as contrast collars with French cuffs in a wide variety of tonal stripes. This Forty-fifth Street store is the home of classic oxford cloth and other great American

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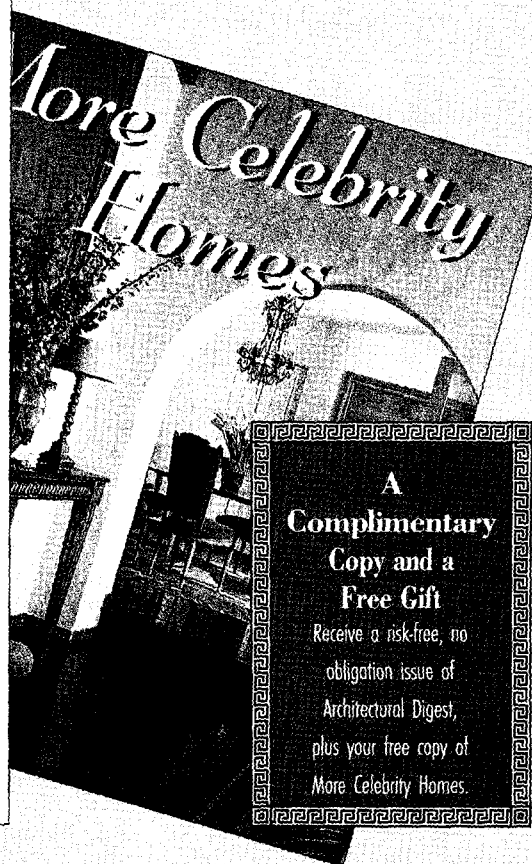
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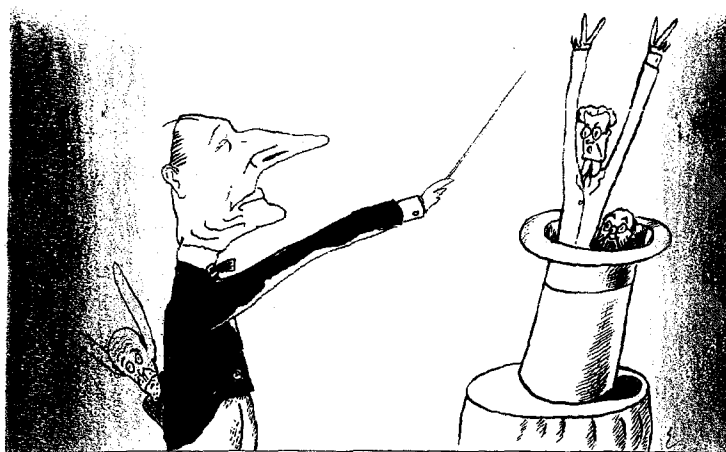
The mystery of the French elections.

BY ADAM GOPNIK

NO one in France really understands why Jacques Chirac decided to call an election for a new National Assembly. By now, Chirac probably no longer understands it himself. The President's right to dissolve the As-

sembly whenever he feels like it is one of those coups de théâtre that de Gaulle scattered through the constitution of the Fifth Republic, like a veteran magician prudently seeding a rabbit-ready hat here and there around the premises. In the mid-eighties, François Mitterrand abruptly called for new legislative elections on a couple of occasions, but his Socialists were in the minority then. Chirac, uniquely, had a crushing majority, which he wanted to exchange for a small, precarious majority, on the ground that the large majority was too difficult to manage. This logic, impeccable in its way, recalls that of Berthillon, the legendary ice-cream maker on the Île Saint-Louis, which shuts down every August because in hot weather the lines outside are just too long.

Elections in France take place in two rounds, on consecutive weekends, and, at the moment, with the second round still to be held, the final winner is hard to predict. However things turn out, though, the results of the first round, last



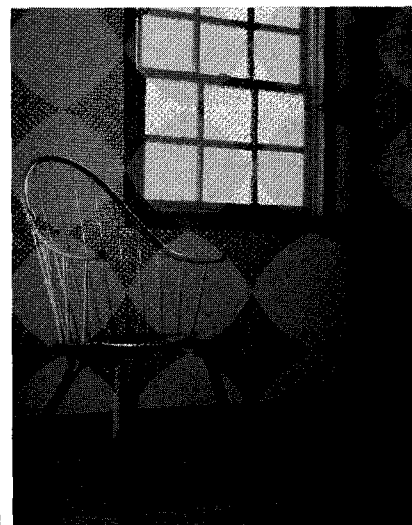
The story of the French election is the persistence of the extreme left.

fifteen per cent, and the spread of small parties (Trotskyists, monarchists, Napoleonists, and many shades of green) accounted for the rest. Theoretically, the first round eliminates the smaller parties and brings about a championship round on the following Sunday, where the big boys can fight it out among themselves. But a small-party candidate who gets more than twelve and a half per cent of the vote in the first round can move on to the second round, creating what the French call a *triangulaire*. A *triangulaire* is like a heavyweight-championship match with a flyweight allowed into the ring to hit anybody he feels like hitting: he can't win himself, but his presence makes it hard to judge form. There are more than a hundred *triangulaire* contests in the next round, a record. Still, the best the right can hope for is a small, precarious majority.

Whatever the outcome, Chirac's decision to dissolve the legislature did have a certain logic: because he was becoming a dangerously ridiculous figure, he *had*

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"If I told you the secret of making light, flaky piecrust, it wouldn't be much of a secret anymore, now would it?"

to have a coup de théâtre. In the minds of many French people, his image had merged with that of a puppet who impersonates him weeknights on a five-minute satirical program. The curious thing for the onlooker—it must be maddening for the President himself—is that the Chirac puppet has almost none of the qualities of his model: the puppet speaks in a breathy, aspirating, self-consoling mumble; his eyes are constantly cast down, as though he were searching his desktop for a sufficiently sonorous phrase to get him out of the crisis; he seems befuddled, and rather likably out of touch. The real Chirac, by contrast, is a wide-eyed, self-confident, self-consciously American-style politician. During his announcement of the dissolution of the Assembly, at the end of April, he made sure to keep himself as pop-eyed as Bette Davis, a man haunted by his own caricature.

Chirac will survive—he has five years left in his term, and at worst he will have to “cohabit” with Lionel Jospin, the Socialists’ leader, as Prime Minister. The real loser, and victim, of the election is Prime Minister Alain Juppé, a smooth,

impressive, balding technocrat, who only eighteen months ago looked like God’s favorite. The day after the election, he announced, with bitter dignity, that he would resign after the second round, whether his party won or lost. Oddly, his failure has been described as a failure of character: he has been called bland, cold, and distant. Really, his problem was just the reverse: Juppé must be the only politician in Europe who has published two books of diaries while in office, describing how sensitive he is to being criticized. It was his insecurity, not his arrogance, that frightened the French. “Like all men who take center stage,” he wrote in his second book of confessions, “I need recognition, consideration, and even affection.” (Françoise Giroud, the grand old lady of French journalism, who publishes her diaries, too, said in hers that this was “putting your *tripes* on the table,” and asked mildly, “Is it really good for a Prime Minister to be the object of commiseration?”)

In retrospect, Juppé’s mistake was taking the job of Prime Minister in the first place. No one survives it. Of Mitterrand’s seven Prime Ministers, only

Chirac himself came out of it in one piece. In the semi-monarchical day-dream that is the Fifth Republic’s constitution, the Prime Minister was meant to play the role of the King’s cardinal—the Richelieu or Mazarin role of the wise, selfless counsellor. In reality, the Prime Minister has assumed the role of the King’s mistress—Mme. de Montespan or Mme. de Pompadour. Like a King’s mistress, the Prime Minister has none of the power and gets all of the blame. He has only proximity, and, in time, he gets less and less of that as the monarch’s eye begins to wander.

No matter who gets the Prime Minister’s job this time, the clear winner of the election is Lionel Jospin, who became the Socialist leader as a *faute-de-mieux*, caretaker candidate only two years ago. At the end of the Mitterrand years, the Socialist Party resembled the Danish court at the end of “Hamlet”: everybody was dead, discredited, or discouraged by the awfulness of it all. Jospin came up as a potential stopgap leader, to hold things together until a real boss emerged. But his ordinariness seems to have endeared him: where Juppé is sleek, literary, and needy, Jospin is gray, solid, and uneasy. He has been compared to a Swedish minister. There is a French tradition of uncharismatic left-wingers, and he fits the mold well. Now nearly sixty, he is a professional politician—a veteran of the *École Nationale d’Administration*, the French academy for politicians—just like Juppé and Chirac. He was generally thought to be too ordinary and unprepossessing, too bourgeois, to make it to the top, but right now muddling middle-classness looks better than misfired eloquence. Jospin’s career is an encouragement to Fortinbrases everywhere.

THE big story in the foreign papers has been the fifteen per cent of the vote won in the first round by Jean-Marie Le Pen’s National Front. The National Front should be despised but not overestimated. Its fifteen per cent is probably about the same percentage that Pat Buchanan and Pat Robertson, whose ideology is identical to Le Pen’s, would get if they were forced out of the mainstream Republican Party into a splinter group of their own. In any case, the National Front, far from being a sudden sinister eruption, represents an enduring right-wing current—one that has been

present in France since the nineteenth century. In the nineteen-thirties, it took a highbrow cast, with Charles Maurras's Action Française, in the nineteen-fifties a populist and rural one, with the Poujadists. As Jean-François Revel, the remarkable French political journalist, points out in his recent memoir, that current has never gone away, and probably never will go away. It also has never come to power, and will not now.

The story of the French election is not so much the rise of the extreme right as it is the persistence of the extreme left. The unreformed Communist Party of France, led by the Friar Tuck look-alike Robert Hue, got ten per cent of the vote; if Jospin wins, there will be Communist ministers in the Cabinet. Yet, despite halfhearted attempts by Juppé to scare people about the Communists' role, their place in the left-wing alliance is by now uncontroversial and unthreatening. By taking the Communists as a junior partner in a left coalition, Mitterrand hoped to rob them of their glamour, and he did. Instead of being the vanguard of the revolution, they have by now, im-

probably, come to play the Ed Norton role in French politics—the blue-collar reality principle complementing the Socialists' grandiose, blowhard Ralph Kramdens.

The temptation for Chirac will be to try to do to the National Front what Mitterrand did to the Communists, except that one of the few impressive things about Chirac is that he genuinely hates and despises the National Front, and will not do business with it. If the French republican right were prepared to make the concessions and ritual abasements that its American conservative equivalents routinely make to Robertson and Buchanan, it would win the next round easily. To its credit, it won't.

AMERICAN journalists also like to say that the campaign has been treated apathetically by the French. (Evidently, all American journalists, at some point in their training, attended an election where high-minded statesmen debated the vital issues before an engaged electorate, and they have been disappointed by all the elections since.) The fact is that

the general decorum in this election has been of an incomparably higher order than anything seen in American politics for decades. With political advertising banned on television, the politicians actually have to argue with each other about what is wrong and what can be done to make it better. And, blessedly, no one, left or right, smiles. In the first and, in some respects, most interesting confrontation of the campaign, the former right-wing Prime Minister Édouard Balladur debated the Socialist former head of the European Union, Jacques Delors. Delors, who looks like one of the Scottish terriers you see on Paris streets, did all his paralinguistic work with his eyebrows: they shot upward to say "Surely no one could be naïve enough to believe *this* proposition," and downward to mean "The view I will offer you now is the product of years of demanding reflection." Balladur did his signifying with his shoulders and the corners of his mouth: a shrug meant "But surely everybody knows the answer to this question already," and a moue "In the circumstances you have outlined, I

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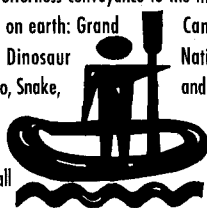
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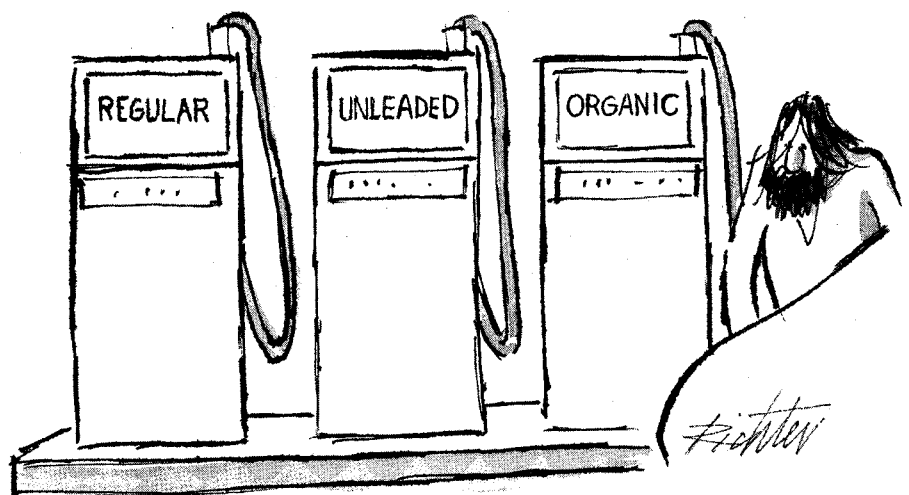
imagine it might just be possible." You could have followed the debate by watching the top half of Delors's head and the bottom half of Balladur's.

Balladur, who was Mitterrand's Prime Minister in the second "cohabitation," is one of two candidates to succeed Juppé as Prime Minister if the right wins the second round. He is a model French politician: condescending, pompous, witty, and imperturbable. When he is cornered by a commentator in a television interview, he has a wonderful trick of escaping by using the commentator's full name in reply. "Ah, Guillaume Durand," he will say reprovingly to the interviewer, "you know the answer to *this* question yourself." The commentator, thrown suddenly back to his school days, gets flustered, and doesn't know which way to look. The other candidate for Prime Minister if the right wins is Philippe Séguin, the president of the Assembly. He is an expansive, beetle-browed, basso-voiced politician who is thought to be on the "social," or leftist, side of the Gaullists. He has made a last-minute political marriage with Alain Madelin, a capable former Cabinet minister who looks like a nervous J.F.K., and who is the only real liberal free marketeer in French politics.

Though the decorum of the debate was terrific, the language was not. The left ran on a platform of adjectives, the right on a platform of adverbs. The Socialists were against extreme liberalism, savage capitalism, unrestrained globalization. The right claimed that French politics would be energetically renewed, the economy vigorously unleashed, society dynamically energized.

This *langue de bois*—vapid, abstract

language—was the most alarming aspect of the election, because it suggested that the enlivening rhetorics of the left-wing and the right-wing parties don't work in France anymore. The left can't allow itself to be optimistic, and the right can't allow itself to be nationalist. For the Gaullist right, the problem has reached the proportions of a crisis. Nationalism is the essence of Gaullism, and, like all nationalisms, it needs an "other" in order to define and sharpen its focus. For years, that other was America. Anti-Americanism endures as an institutional reflex, but it no longer has a national appeal. Whereas the idea of Europe was once an extension of Gaullist nationalism (and therefore of anti-Americanism), it has by now become an abstract, book-keeper's notion with no emotional resonance. At the same time, American manners, in the form of our popular culture, have become so pervasive that they are no longer even "American." "Friends" is so popular that not long ago it was celebrated with a twenty-four-hour marathon on Canal Jimmy, a popular French network filled with American sitcoms. Two teen-agers who committed suicide in the Loire Valley a week ago turned out to be obsessed Kurt Cobain fans, dreaming of Seattle. In *Libération* the other day, the election was described as "the X-Files election." And a political commentator reflecting on Chirac's peculiar mixture of good intentions and missed opportunities said, "You have to understand. He's a decent man but limited. A lot like the mayor on 'Spin City.'" ("Spin City" is also on the Jimmy channel.) The French right seems unable to appeal any longer to the mystical Catholic roots of Gaullism. If the right



is anti-immigrant or anti-European, it becomes Lepeniste; if it is anti-American, it is unreal.

The right lacks a "Catholic" candidate, and the left lacks a "computer" candidate. French intellectuals and journalists of the left are bewitched by the invocation of globalization as the source of France's problems. In reality, France is a great exporting country, which can only benefit from free trade. The more sneakers they make in Malaysia, the more cognac they'll want to buy. "Globalization" is one of those empty, abstract scare words (like "simulacra" or "hegemony") that act as a substitute for experience among French intellectuals.

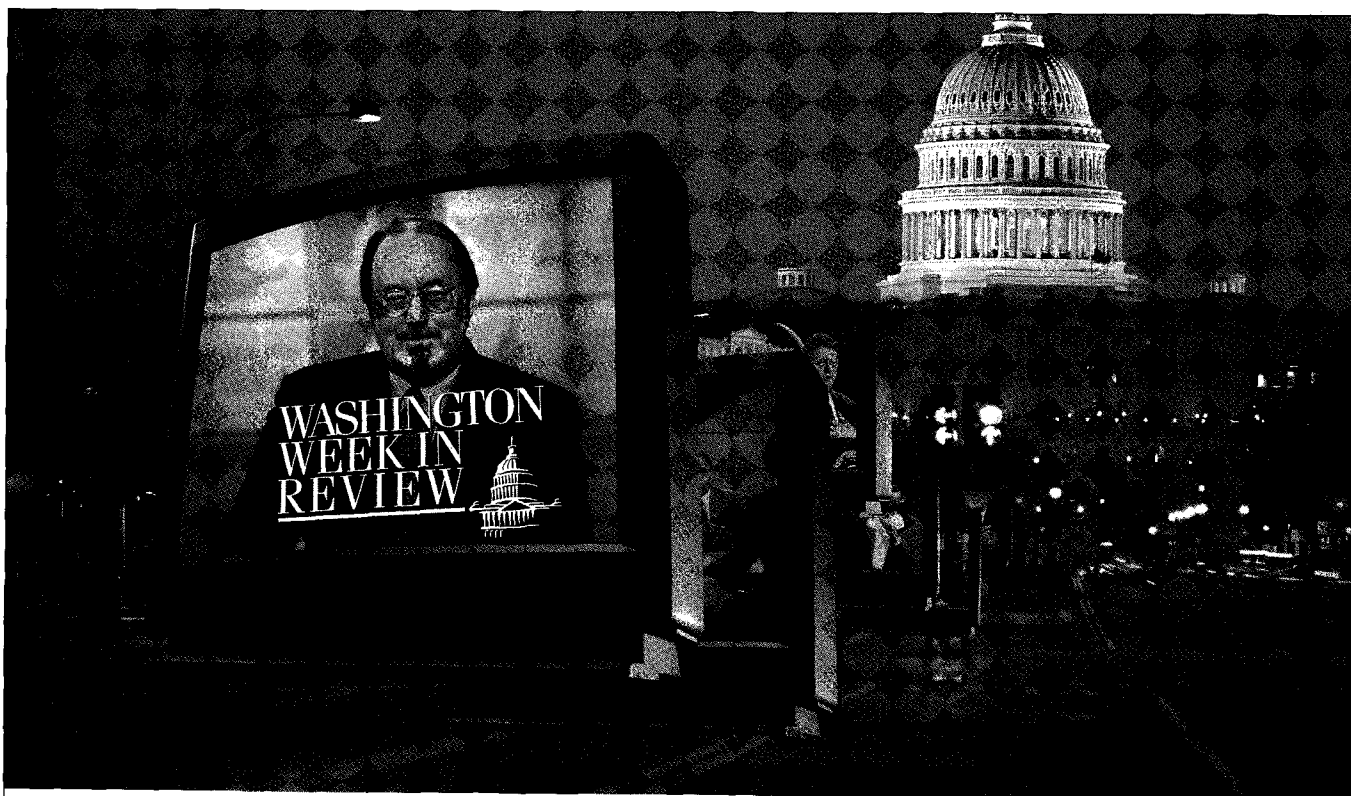
The trouble with the French economy, most economists agree, is that the computer revolution hasn't taken yet. The steady minor productivity increases that are commonplace in America and Britain now are still unknown in France. It is evident every day: the student copy shops near the Sorbonne still use self-service, one-page-at-a-time machines, of a kind that were prevalent in America in 1975; the video-rental shops usually

offer bad, second-generation copies, since the capital necessary to buy new videos in bulk just isn't there. France has done fine on the big technological revolutions—the Channel tunnel, the airports, and the T.G.V., or very fast trains—but it missed the revolution that was taking place in the bedrooms of twelve-year-olds all over the world.

This should present a natural opportunity for a populist left-wing party. In fact, Laurent Fabius, one of Mitterrand's Prime Ministers, tried to get the Socialists to become a computer-conscious party a decade ago. But today's Socialists have become a purely reactionary force; they can't offer to build a bridge to the future, since none of their clientele intend to go anywhere near the river. France is left without a sustaining connection between politics and rhetoric. The right is unable to claim the past, and the left is unable to claim the future.

FOR the first time, in the week after the election, there seemed to be a feeling in Paris that this thing was *serious*—not a game or a social drama but a

real crisis, recalling the crisis of the thirties. The Fifth Republic was supposed to cure two fatal French weaknesses: the weakness for abstract argument and its companion weakness for desperate factionalism. This week, everyone insisted that Chirac, in selecting his new Prime Minister, would have to choose between the "liberal model," represented by Balladur, and the "social model," represented by Séguin, even though the liberal model and the social model are obviously the same model seen at different moments. (The liberal model tells you how to make the money, and the social model what to do with it once you've got it.) This distinction sounds like one more tendentious abstraction. Meanwhile, all week Balladur and Séguin have been making eyes at the President, parading their charms as potential Prime Ministers—posing for statesman-like photos in *Figaro*, and giving sapient interviews to *L'Express* and *Le Monde*. The unnerving thing is that all of it may amount to nothing. The President, like Swann, may wake up in bed with a mistress who was never his style. ♦



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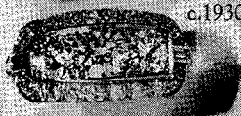
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MEDICAL DISPATCHES

THE ESTROGEN QUESTION

How wrong is Dr. Susan Love?

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

WHEN Dr. Susan Love gives speeches, she stands informally, with her feet slightly apart and her hands in casual motion. She talks without notes, as if she were holding a conversation, and translates the complexities of medicine and women's health with clarity and wit. "I see my role as a truth-teller," she told a sold-out audience of middle-aged women at the Smithsonian, in Washington, last month, and everybody roared with approval, because that's what they've come to expect of Susan Love. She was, as usual, dressed simply that day—in a blue pants suit, with no makeup and with her hair in a short perm that looked as if she had combed it with her fingers. She had no briefcase or purse or adornment of any sort, and certainly none of a surgeon's customary hauteur, since it is Love's belief that medicine has for too long condescended to women. She was there to promote her new best-seller on estrogen therapy and menopause, but she made it clear right away that she wasn't about to preach. "Don't expect to leave here tonight knowing what to do," she said. Love wanted her audience to hear the evidence but, above all, to listen to their own feelings. "You have lived in your body a long time," she told the crowd, smiling warmly and reassuringly. "You know it pretty well—you know how it reacts to things, and you can trust it."

There are at least three doctors in America who fall into the category of media celebrity—who can reliably write a best-seller or fill a lecture hall. The first is Deepak Chopra, practitioner of quantum healing and mind-body medicine. The second is Andrew Weil, whose seventh book, "Eight Weeks to Optimum Health," has been on the best-seller lists since March. And the third is Susan Love, breast surgeon, co-founder of the National Breast Cancer Coalition, and the author of two hugely successful books: "Dr. Susan Love's

Breast Book," in 1990, and this year's "Dr. Susan Love's Hormone Book."

These celebrity doctors are all, in one way or another, proponents of what is fast becoming a basic tenet of popular medicine: that the system of health care devised by doctors and drug companies and hospitals is closed-minded, arrogant, and paternalistic—dismissive of the role that nontraditional remedies, and patients themselves, can play in treating illness. "Blind faith in professional medicine is not healthy," Weil states flatly in "Natural Health, Natural Medicine"—and it's a sentence that could easily have appeared in any of the books by Love or Chopra.

Of the three, though, Love's critique is the most sophisticated. She's not a hippie, like Weil, or a mystic, like Chopra. She's a respected clinician—the former director of the Revlon-U.C.L.A. Breast Center, and an adviser to the National Institutes of Health's vast Women's Health Initiative—and her criticisms have the power of the insider. Karen Stabiner writes, in "To Dance with the Devil," her brilliant, recently published account of Love's tenure at U.C.L.A.:

Love had a set of immutable rules about proper examining room behavior, all designed to even out what she saw as an impossibly inequitable relationship. She always had the patient get dressed after an exam and threatened that otherwise she would have to disrobe to even things out. She never stood with her hands folded across her chest, which would make her seem inaccessible. She tried never to stand near the door, which made the patient feel that the doctor was in a hurry. Love had been known to breeze into a room and sit on the floor, legs splayed, her notes on her lap. She often sat on the footstool the patients used to step up onto the table. It was a conscious maneuver. These women felt helpless enough without having to assume a supplicant's posture, staring up at the all-knowing physician.

In "Dr. Susan Love's Hormone Book" Love applies this skepticism to perhaps the most important topic in women's health today: whether older

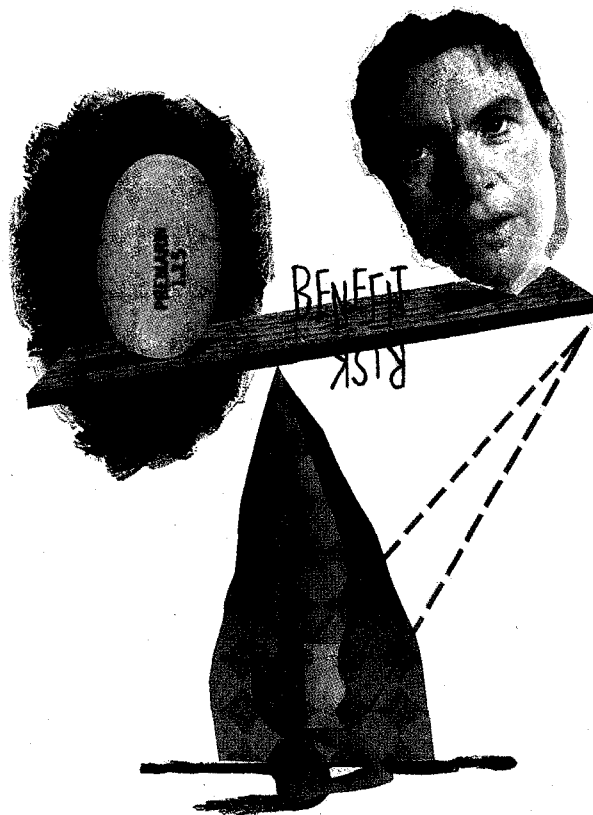
women should take estrogen. The medical establishment and the pharmaceutical industry, she says, have told women that they have a disease, menopause, and have then given them a cure, estrogen, even though it's not clear that the disease is a disease or that the cure is a cure. "The reason I got into this is that a lot of the books out there were 'Don't worry, dear, we'll take care of it,'" Love told me just before she took the stage at the Smithsonian.

"Women were dying to get more information, literally and figuratively. They weren't hearing the voice that says, 'You can figure this out. This is your choice, this is your body, this is your life. You don't have to do what the doctor says. You can do what feels right for you.' That's the voice that was missing." It's a nearly irresistible argument, made all the more so by the way Love presents it—honestly, passionately, forthrightly. So why, after even the slightest scrutiny, does so much of what Love has to say begin to fall apart?

ESTROGEN, or Premarin (the trade name under which it is principally sold), is the most widely used prescription drug in the United States. Taken in the short term, during the onset of menopause, it offers relief from hot flashes and other symptoms. Taken over the long term, as part of a regime of hormone-replacement therapy (H.R.T.), it has been shown to reduce the risk of hip and spinal fractures in older women by as much as half, to lower the risk of heart disease by somewhere between forty and fifty per cent, and even—in recent and very preliminary work—to either forestall or modify the ravages of Alzheimer's disease and osteoarthritis. H.R.T. has two potential side effects, however. It raises the risk of uterine cancer, and that's why many women who take Premarin add a dose of the hormone progesterin, which blocks the action of estrogen in the uterus. Long-term H.R.T. may also lead to higher rates of breast cancer.

It is this last fact that Love considers the most important. She has spent almost all her professional career fighting breast cancer, and was one of the

earliest and most vocal opponents of radical mastectomies. Through the National Breast Cancer Coalition, she helped lead the fight to increase government funding for breast-cancer research, and it's hardly an exaggeration to say that her first book, "Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book," is to women's health what Benjamin Spock's "Baby and Child Care" was to parenting. Love is concerned about breast cancer above



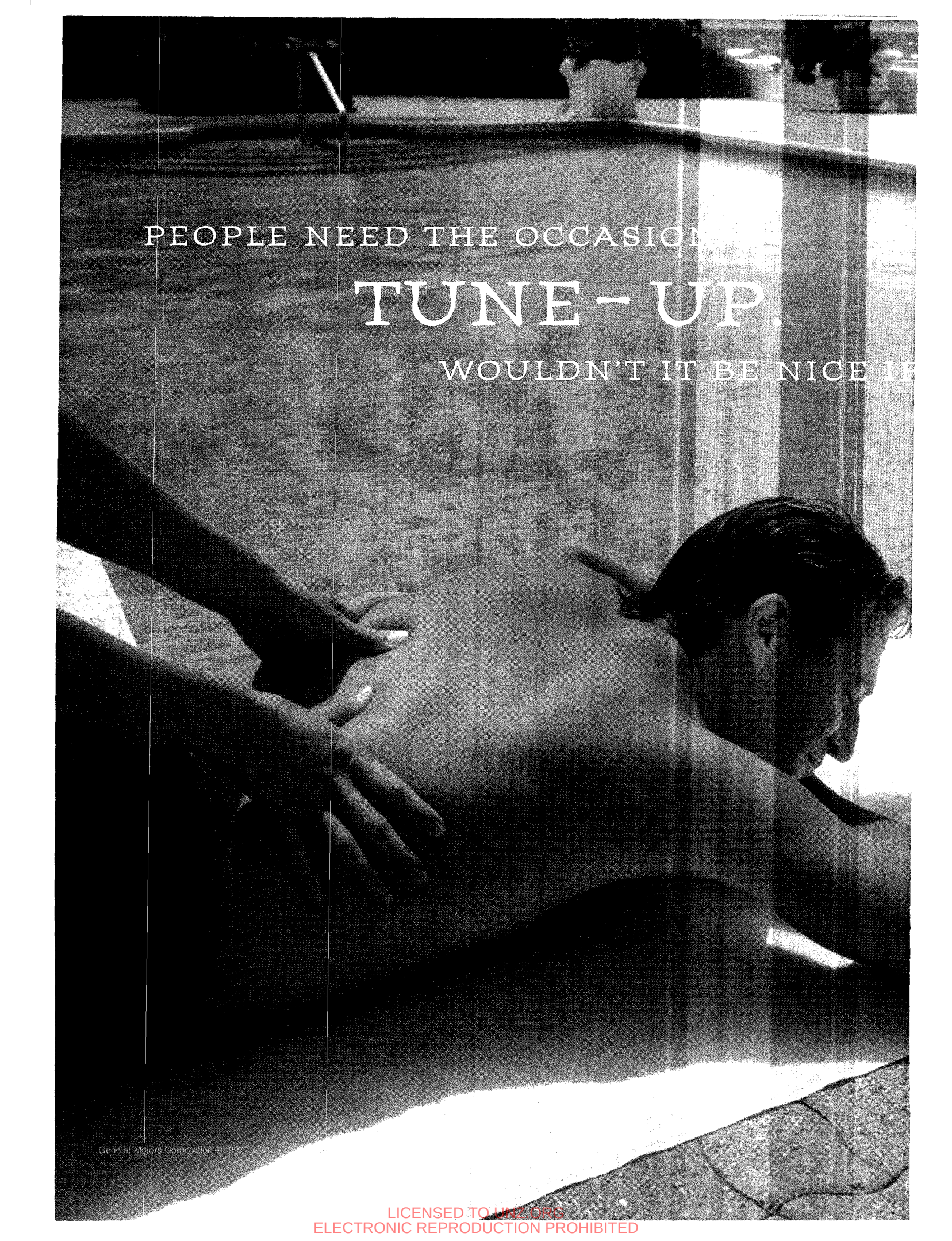
Why, after even the slightest scrutiny, does so much of what Love has to say begin to fall apart?

all else: she's worried about anything that might increase the risk of such an implacable disease. What's more, she believes that the benefits of estrogen are vastly exaggerated. Women humped over with osteoporosis are, according to Love, "far more common in Premarin ads than in everyday life," and she says that, since serious bone loss doesn't occur until very late in life, taking estrogen over the long term is unnecessary. On the question of heart disease, she says that the studies purporting to show estrogen's benefits are critically flawed. In any case, she points out, there are ways women can cut their risk of a heart attack which don't involve taking drugs—such as eating right and exercising. So why take the chance? "It's only very recently that we've started talking about using drugs for prevention,

and that's O.K. when we talk about high cholesterol or high blood pressure," she told me. "Those are people who have something wrong. But when you talk about H.R.T. for postmenopausal women, you're talking about women who have nothing wrong, who are normal, who may never get these diseases, and who are not necessarily at high risk. There is no drug that is a free lunch. There are always side effects, so why would we put women on a drug that has the side effect of a potentially life-threatening disease?"

What Love has done is recalculate the risk/benefit equation for estrogen, which is fine, except that she consistently overstates the risks and understates the benefits. In the case of osteoporosis, for example, it is true that most women don't experience the effects of bone loss until their seventies. But some—about ten to fifteen per cent of women—do, with quite serious consequences. It's also the case that the maximum protection against hip fractures comes only after ten years of H.R.T., which, considering how debilitating hip fractures are to the well-being of the elderly, is a strong argument for long-term estrogen use. Or consider how Love deals with the question of heart disease. All the major studies from which conclusions have been drawn are what

are called observational studies: epidemiologists have found a large group of women who were taking estrogen, followed them for a number of years, and then determined that those women had about half the number of heart attacks that women who weren't taking estrogen had. The problem with this kind of study, of course, is that it doesn't tell you whether estrogen lowers the risk of heart disease or whether the kind of women who have the lowest risk of heart disease are the kind of women who take estrogen. Love suspects that it's the latter. In all the studies, she points out in her new book, "the women who took estrogen were of higher socioeconomic status, better educated, thinner, more likely to be non-smokers . . . more likely to go to doctors . . . and therefore more likely to have had overall preventative care, such

A black and white photograph of a man lying on his stomach on a massage table, receiving a back massage. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from a window on the right, creating a relaxing atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

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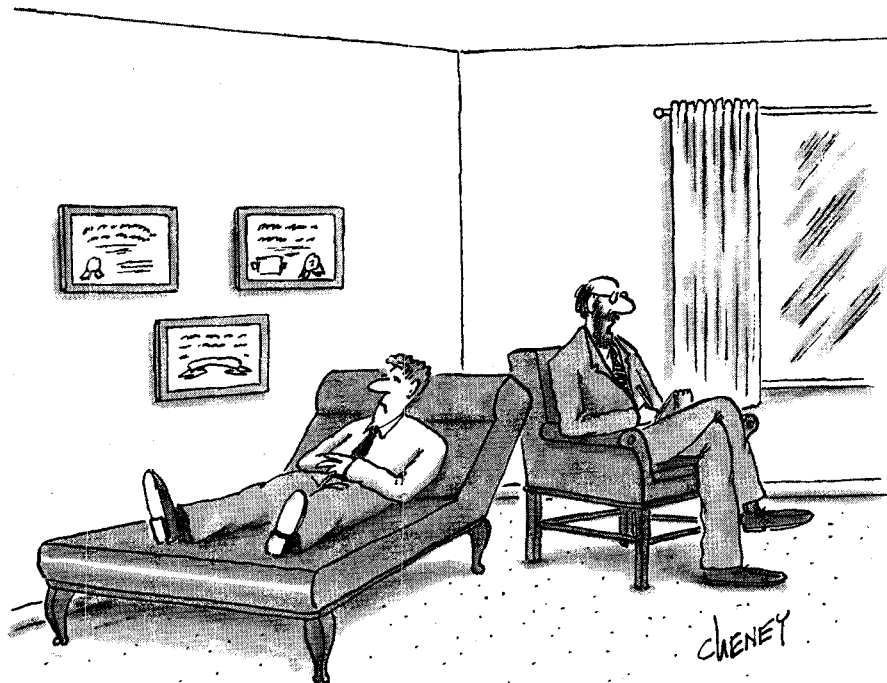
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as having their blood pressure checked and their cholesterol monitored."

What Love doesn't point out, though, is that over the past decade estrogen researchers have been scrupulously attempting to account for this problem, by breaking down the data in order to match up the estrogen users more closely with the nonusers. Women on hormones who smoke, have a college degree, and have high blood pressure, say, are matched up with women who smoke, have a college degree and high blood pressure, and don't take hormones. It's an imperfect way of breaking down the data, since the resulting samples are not always large enough to be statistically significant. But it gives you some idea of how real the effect of estrogen is, and when researchers have done this kind of reanalysis they've found that estrogen cuts heart attacks by about forty per cent, which is a lower figure than before the reanalysis but still awfully impressive.

With breast cancer, Love takes the opposite approach—taking a relatively weak piece of evidence and making it appear more robust than it is. Her logic goes something like this. We know that hysterectomies, regular exercise, and early pregnancy—all things that lower a woman's exposure to her own estro-

gen—reduce the risk of breast cancer. We also know that having one's first period before the age of twelve, having children late or never having children, reaching menopause late, drinking a lot of alcohol, or being overweight—things that raise a woman's exposure to her own estrogen—increase the risk of breast cancer. "Since your body's own hormones can cause breast cancer," Love writes, "it makes sense to conclude that hormones taken as drugs will also increase your risk."

That sounds persuasive. But where's the clinical evidence to support it? "I just reviewed the hormone/breast-cancer research from the last five years," Trudy Bush, an epidemiologist at the University of Maryland, told me. "I found one report, from the Nurses' Health Study, showing a forty-per-cent increase in breast-cancer risk. I found four reports—two very large and well done—showing no effect, and I found another study showing that estrogen gave women significant protection *against* breast cancer. They're all over the place."

The problem is that measuring the link between estrogen and breast-cancer risk is tricky. The Nurses' Health Study, for example, which showed that women on H.R.T. had a forty-per-cent greater chance of getting breast cancer, is the study

that has received the most media attention and the one that preoccupies Love: it is among the largest and best of the studies, and its conclusions are worrying. But it has some of the same selection-bias problems as the heart-disease studies. The estrogen users in the study, for example, had fewer pregnancies, got their periods earlier, and have other differences with the control group which would lead you to believe that they might have had a higher risk of breast cancer anyway.

There is another possible complication: estrogen does such a good job of fighting heart disease that most women who are on H.R.T. live substantially longer than women who aren't. In a recent computer analysis, Nananda Col, who teaches at the Tufts School of Medicine, and her colleagues there took the most conservative possible estimates—the highest available estimate for breast-cancer risk and the lowest one for heart-disease benefit—and devised an H.R.T. risk/benefit table, from which any woman can figure out on the basis of her own risk factors what her expected benefit would be. It shows that a woman who smokes, has relatively high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and moderate breast-cancer risk can expect to live two and a half years longer if she takes estrogen. That's two and a half years in which she has a chance to develop another disease of old age—for example, breast cancer. In other words, you'd expect to see more breast cancer in women who are on estrogen than in women who aren't, even if estrogen has nothing whatever to do with cancer, for the simple reason that women on estrogen live so much longer that they have a greater chance of getting the disease naturally.

Most experts agree that, in the end, H.R.T. is probably linked to some increased breast-cancer risk. What all the questions suggest, though, is that the effect is probably not huge and is certainly nowhere close to cancelling out the benefits of estrogen in fighting heart disease. Col, in her computer analysis, estimates that only about one per cent of women—those with the very highest risk of breast cancer and only a slight heart-disease risk—can expect no gain, or even a loss, in life expectancy from H.R.T. Everybody else—even those who have a close relative with breast cancer—is likely to benefit from the

drug, and for some women taking estrogen is as good a way of living longer as quitting smoking. It is, unfortunately, very hard to convince most women of this fact. As few as a quarter of those who begin H.R.T. stay on the treatment for more than two years, and much of that has to do with the persistent inclination of many women to overestimate their risks of getting breast cancer and underestimate their risks of developing heart disease. In one recent study of several hundred educated middle-aged women, almost three-quarters of those polled thought that their risk of developing heart disease by age seventy was less than one per cent—when, in fact, statistically, it's more like twenty per cent. In making her argument the way she does, then, Love is not "truthtelling"; she's simply furthering an existing—and dangerous—myth. "You can understand where she's coming from," Trudy Bush says. "Fourteen hours a day, six days a week, she sees women with breast cancer, and that's all she sees. Your world becomes very narrowly defined. It happens with everyone who is a breast surgeon. But I also think that there is a perception on the part of some women who are activists that there is a conspiracy to force women to buy these hormones and force doctors to prescribe them. Instead of the military-industrial complex, it would be the A.M.A.-pharmaceutical complex. But things aren't so simple. In my opinion, we're all struggling here, trying to tease this out. We can only look at the data."

In March, Love published an Op-Ed piece in the *Times*, in which she directly addressed the question of the relative risks facing women. "Pharmaceutical companies defend their products by pointing out that one in three women dies of heart disease, while one in eight women gets breast cancer," she wrote. "Although this is true, it is important to note that in women younger than age 75 there are actually three times as many deaths from breast cancer as there are from heart disease."

This statistic is central to Love's argument. She is saying that it makes no sense to avoid something that will kill you tomorrow if it increases your chances of dying of something else today. Incredibly, however, Love has her numbers backward: in women younger than seventy-five, there are actually more than three

times as many deaths from heart disease as from breast cancer. (In 1993, about ninety-six thousand women between thirty-five and seventy-four died of heart disease, while twenty-eight thousand died of breast cancer.) Even the general idea behind this argument—that heart disease is more of a problem for older women and breast cancer is more of a problem for younger women—is wrong. In every menopausal and postmenopausal age category, more women die of heart attacks than die of breast cancer. For women between the ages of forty-five and fifty-four, death rates for heart disease are roughly 1.4 times those for breast cancer. For women between the ages of fifty-five and sixty-four, it's nearly three times the problem; for women between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-four, it's five and a half times the problem; and for women seventy-five and older it's almost twenty times the problem.

It's hard to know what to make of this kind of error. The Harvard epidemiologist Meir Stampfer was so dismayed by it that he wrote a letter to the editor of the *Times*, which was published a week after Love's article appeared. But he didn't think that her mistake was deliberate. He thought that she had just looked at the government's mortality tables and confused the heart-disease category with the breast-cancer category. "Somebody told me that they heard her on the radio or TV giving those wrong numbers, and I was pretty astonished," Stampfer told me. "And then, when I saw it in print, I flipped my lid a little bit. I'm assuming that it's just an unwitting transposition of the numbers."

That, at least, is the charitable explanation. When I met with Love, a month or so after Stampfer's letter appeared, I asked her about the relative

risks of breast cancer and heart disease. We were sitting together in a booth at a hotel coffee shop in downtown Washington. It was the kind of situation, you'd think, where she might have felt free to admit to embarrassment or to offer some kind of candid explanation for what went wrong. But that's not what happened. "One of the problems with that comparison is that they act like these diseases are all at the same time," she answered. "Most women at fifty know someone who has died of breast cancer. Most women at fifty don't know someone who has had heart disease." Her eyes locked reassuringly on mine. "That's because under seventy-five there are three times as many deaths from breast cancer as from heart disease."

THERE is an even more striking problem with the anti-estrogen movement, and that is the way that it ignores the next generation of H.R.T., the compounds known as SERMs (for "selective estrogen-receptor modulators"). For many years, it was thought that estrogen was a kind of blunt instrument, that if a woman took the hormone it would affect her bones and her breasts and her heart and her uterus in the same way. In other words, it was thought that a woman's body had one kind of molecular switch that would be turned on all over the body whenever she took the hormone. But when scientists were testing the drug tamoxifen on women with breast cancer several years ago, they found out something unexpected. Tamoxifen was supposed to turn off the estrogen switch, so someone with breast cancer would take it on the theory that starving breast tissue of natural estrogen would help shrink or prevent tumors. "Everyone expected that the bone quality in these women on tamoxifen would not be good," Donald McDonnell, a pharmacologist at Duke University, told me, explaining that people had assumed that if there was no estrogen going to the breasts there would be none going to the bones, either. In fact, though, the women's bones were fine. Somehow, tamoxifen was turning off the estrogen switch in the breasts but acting just like estrogen in the bones. "What that suggested for the first time was that maybe estrogen doesn't work the same way in every cell



and maybe we could use this information to build better compounds that would be tissue-selective," McDonnell said.

What researchers now believe is that there are many kinds of estrogen switches in the body, and that whether they turn on or off is highly dependent on the type of the estrogenlike compound that they are presented with. Tamoxifen, by purest chance, happens to be a compound that turns the switch on in the bones and off in the breasts. Unfortunately, it also turns the switch on in the uterus, raising the risk of uterine cancer. But a second generation of SERMs is now in development; these act like estrogen in the heart and the bones but block the harmful effects of estrogen in the breasts and the uterus. McDonnell has one such compound that is about to go into clinical trials. The Indianapolis-based drug firm Eli Lilly has another—Raloxifene—that is much further along and could be on the market within a year or so. Before very long, in short, women worried about raising their breast-cancer risk will have the option of taking a different kind of hormone that doesn't affect their breasts at all—or that may even protect against breast cancer.

"In the past, what you were looking at was a risk/benefit game," John D. Termine, a vice-president at Lilly's research laboratories, told me. "There was estrogen with all these terrific properties, but at the same time there was this downside, that women were afraid of breast cancer. Now Raloxifene and the other SERMs come along, and we're going to have alternatives. Now the risks and benefits are much different, because we have something else. . . . One of the physicians on our advisory board said that it's like when beta-blockers were introduced for heart diseases. It changed the game completely."

You might think that this development would be of enormous significance to Love, answering, as it does, her great worry about the potential side effects of H.R.T. In fact, she mentions SERMs just twice in her book and, each time, only briefly. It's a bit as if someone had written a book about computers in 1984 and dismissed the PC in a paragraph. This

is what she has to say about the new generation of estrogen substitutes:

Scientists are hoping to use some of this new information to design the perfect hormone: one that will protect the uterus and breast from cancer, stop hot flashes, and prevent osteoporosis and heart disease. It would be lovely—could it do housework too?—but I'm skeptical. It would still be a drug. And I have yet to see a drug that doesn't have some side effects.

This is an extraordinary passage. It would *still* be a drug? What form does a successful medical intervention have to take before Love finds it acceptable?



And, for that matter, since when does the possibility of side effects negate the usefulness of a drug? Drugs have side effects, but we take them anyway, because in most cases the side effects are a lot less significant than the main effects. (That's why they're called side effects.) At one point in her speech in Washington, Love spoke of her daily breakfast of soy milk and flax-seed granola, and boasted jokingly that it was so rich in natural plant estrogens that "one bowl is as good as a Premarin pill." Now it turns out that one bowl is not as good as a Premarin pill, because plant estrogens are much weaker than animal estrogens. Nor are plant estrogens exactly "natural," because plant estrogens are, technically, nonsteroidal while Premarin—like the estrogen a woman makes herself—is a steroid. But Love wasn't really intending to enter into a discussion of estrogen chemistry. She was simply express-

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on the electrically heated casing of my fifty calibre
machine gun. I remember the taste of life.

—HARVEY SHAPIRO

ing her skepticism of modern medicine—of the idea that medical salvation can come in the form of a pill. Her objection is not to Premarin itself so much as it is to the idea that postmenopausal women should rely on any sort of drug at all.

This is where, sooner or later, you end up when you start down the path of people like Andrew Weil and Deepak Chopra and Susan Love. To read the health books on the best-seller lists right now is to be left with the impression that exercise and a good diet are all that matter—that medicine is too ineffectual to help us if we do not first help ourselves. That's one of the reasons these books are so successful: they take the language of emotional and spiritual fulfillment and apply it to medicine, prompting people to find and follow their own instincts about health in the same way they have been taught to find and follow their own instincts in relationships, say. When Love told me in Washington that "this is your choice, this is your body, this is your life," that's what she meant—that the medical was the personal. This kind of talk may inspire people to shape up, which is all to the good. But it does not begin to reflect how sophisticated and powerful medicine has become. In the introduction to his 1990 book "Natural Health, Natural Medicine" Weil claims that "professional medicine" is "bad" at treating, among other diseases, cancer and viral infections. Yet today, just a few years after he wrote those words, not only are we on the verge of get-

ting a new class of anti-influenza drugs but combination therapy for H.I.V. appears to have dramatically extended the lives of AIDS patients, and over the next several years the biotechnology industry is likely to get approval for almost two dozen new cancer drugs, representing a second generation of treatments, to replace chemotherapy and radiation. The list of things that traditional medicine is bad at gets shorter all the time.

Earlier this year, a study appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that put many of these changes in perspective. The study, conducted by a team from Harvard University's School of Public Health, attempted to figure out why the mortality rate from coronary heart disease dropped so dramatically in the nineteen-eighties. In that decade, the decline averaged 3.4 per cent a year, which means that in 1990 there were about a hundred and thirty thousand fewer deaths from heart disease in America than there would have been if the mortality rate had been the same as it was in 1980. Most people, I think, would credit this extraordinary achievement to our getting more exercise in the nineteen-eighties and losing weight. But we didn't, much. Smoking, which is obviously a major risk factor for heart disease, was down, but not by a lot: the Harvard group estimated that declines in smoking probably account for about six per cent of the decrease. People did eat better as the decade progressed, but better diet probably accounts for only about a quarter of the difference. Most of the drop—about seventy per cent of the total—happened because of the increased use of procedures like angioplasty and coronary bypass and, more important, the advent of a new class of powerful clot-dissolving drugs, like streptokinase and tissue-plasminogen activator.

This does not, of course, change the fact that people should exercise and eat properly and take charge of their lives. We should all listen to our bodies and make our own choices. But there are times when what we can find out about our bodies and do for ourselves pales in comparison to what we do not know and cannot do—when we have to rely on doctors and medicine to do things for us. There is more to medicine than can be explained by the language of personal fulfillment. ♦



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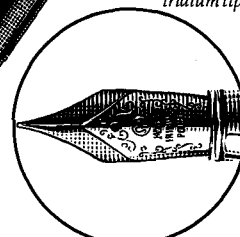
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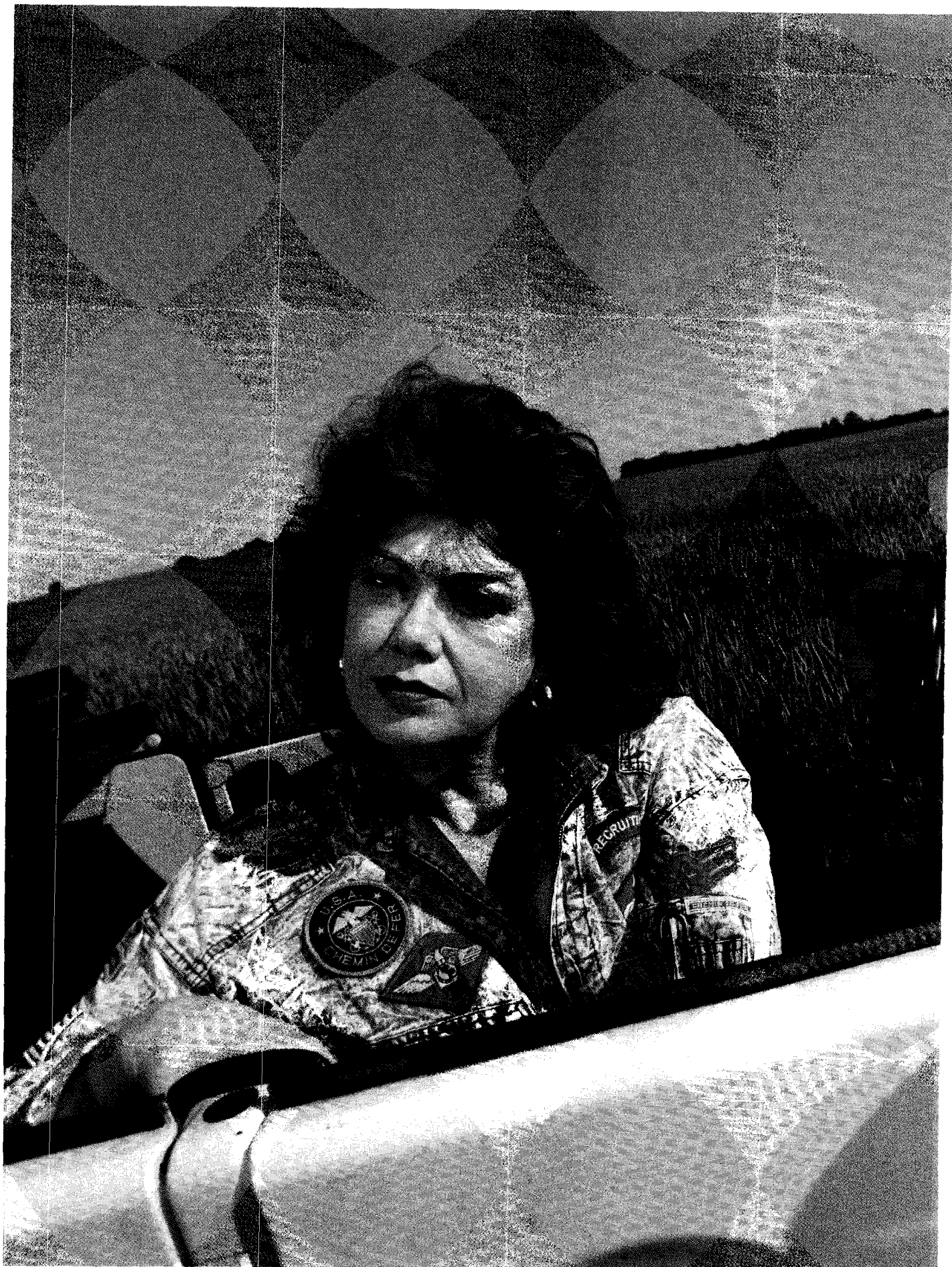


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Some speculated on whether Hill would have testified against Brown. She says, "I was torn between what this had done to n

A REPORTER AT LARGE

RON BROWN'S SECRETS

Texas businesswoman Nolanda Hill was the late Commerce Secretary's mistress for the last years of his life. Why are the Feds still so interested in her?

BY PETER J. BOYER

IN the dreary midafternoon of April 3, 1996, twenty-four minutes after a significant blip vanished from the screen of a radar monitor in Dubrovnik, Croatia, local authorities telephoned the United States Embassy with the news that the aircraft bearing the American Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, and his entourage of thirty-two was missing. Ambassador Peter Galbraith telephoned the State Department, beginning a communications chain of the sort that is urgently constructed at such moments in the hope of delivering bad tidings to friends and family ahead of CNN. The next morning, the President called the Brown home himself and broke the news of the Secretary's death to his wife, Alma. Somewhere down the chain, it was decided that a call needed to be made to a Texas businesswoman named Nolanda Hill, who was not exactly a member of the family but was, as those closest to Brown knew, much more than his friend.

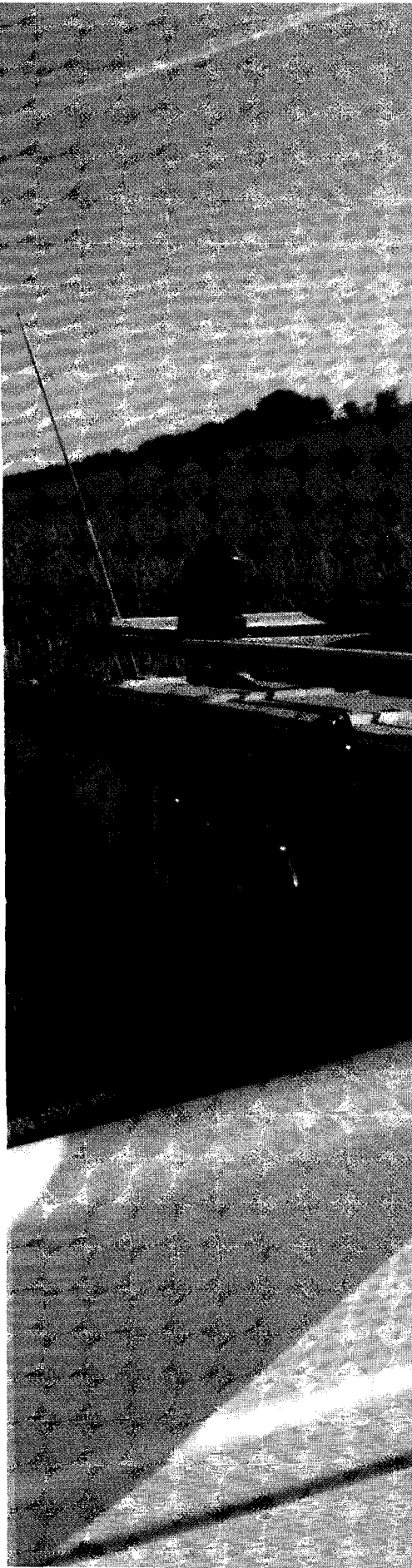
Dealing with Hill was a familiar task for Brown's staff, and even for the White House. When, in January, 1993, Brown's confirmation as Commerce Secretary was threatened by Republican opposition, Nolanda Hill was invited into the war room in the basement of Brown's home, where she helped to advise the team that guided Brown's nomination through. Later, in 1994, when a congressional committee began to scrutinize Brown's personal finances, the White House, trying to contain a budding scandal, dispatched a team of lawyers to Hill's apartment for a series of debriefing sessions with her. So intimately involved was she in Brown's life that the containment squad quizzed her about where in his private life the land mines were buried. Of particular concern was a series of lucrative business transactions that Republicans would portray as political payoffs. "She's the only one who

understood his business," one former Administration official says. "There were a lot of things Ron didn't remember." But Nolanda Hill knew everything. For almost ten years, Hill was Ron Brown's business partner and his closest political adviser, and, for the last seven years of his life, she was his lover.

The political mistress is a stock Washington character, yet the relationship between Ron Brown and Nolanda Hill was a distinct nineteen-nineties variation of that timeless arrangement by which powerful men acquire and maintain paramours; they both were resourceful, charismatic operators who loved to make deals. But it was she who brought to the relationship the greater personal and material capital, who took the greater risk, and who paid the higher price when their shared enterprises went sour. During her long relationship with Brown, Hill lost her business, her marriage, her only child, and, briefly, her sanity. In May, 1995, she also became the target, with Brown, of a federal independent counsel's investigation into a series of dubious transactions that she had contrived for their mutual benefit, the remnants of which remain unresolved.

At his death, Ron Brown was a beleaguered figure in an Administration beset by controversy, and it is unlikely that he would have been a member of Clinton's second-term Cabinet. Some indication of the difficulties that would have faced him had he lived came late last month, when the Justice Department secured guilty pleas for felonies from two Brown associates who have links to the current controversy over Democratic fund-raising. Because of Hill's involvement with Brown's business deals, her role is of abiding interest to federal prosecutors.

Since Brown's death, Hill has become, in that Washington circle she once knew



family, and how much I loved Ron."

PHOTOGRAPH BY HARRY BENSON

so well, a sort of nonperson—but not a forgotten one. Her telephone calls to many former acquaintances are not returned, but she remains the subject of much speculative buzz: Is she crazy? Is she writing a book? “People are afraid of her,” one member of the circle said. “They don’t know how much she knows, what she knows, what Ron told her.”

BY the time Nolanda Hill met Ron Brown, in 1983, she was on her third marriage and was already a millionaire, having established a television station in Dallas and sold it with exquisitely profitable timing. With dark-red hair and pale-blue eyes, she made a striking impression, the more so on those occasions when she arrived at a meeting in her cherry-red Corvette or riding one of her three Harleys. She was profane and flirtatious and smart, and although she could put on the refined airs that come from what ladies in her native Texas call good breeding, she was proud that she’d made her way up from the wrong side of the train trestle crossing the Trinity River. She grew up the second of three sisters in Irving, which is now a Dallas suburb (it’s where the Cowboys play ball) but was then a dusty, working-class town populated mostly by truck farmers. Her father, Nolan Butler, had got himself hired at a defense plant in order to stay out of the Second World War, and her mother, Francile, was a schoolteacher.

Of the three girls, Nolanda—who wore glasses and had that red hair—considered herself the ugly duckling (“The younger one was a Miss Texas, and the older one could have been,” she says), but she was her daddy’s darling as well as his namesake, and she adored him. Nolanda fancied herself the clever Butler sister, and she believed Nolan when he told her she could become a Supreme Court Justice. Francile aimed the girls beyond their station, sending them to elocution classes and poise lessons and music instruction. All three sisters sang, and Nolanda played piano, and they formed an act, travelling the rodeo and church-social circuit to help pay their way through Stephen F. Austin State University, their mother’s alma mater. Nolanda didn’t have the tuition money for law school, so she got a job at a Dallas television station; she soon decided that she had found a business she

could master. She says she remembers saying to herself, “Television is going to change the world; it’s got everything you need—sight, sound, motion, and stupid white men.”

In 1971, having extricated herself from a brief, early marriage to a boy she’d met in college, Nolanda married the general manager of the station, a man about twenty years her senior named Sheldon Turner, who taught her the television business. Nolanda was a quick study, and she soon persuaded Turner to help her become an owner. They acquired the license of a UHF station in Dallas, KNBN, which had been owned by the televangelist Pat Robertson’s religious network. Hill eventually turned KNBN into a Spanish-language station and entered the experimental pay-TV market. Hill was operating in the margins of the broadcasting business, and she struggled to keep the enterprise afloat; but she was also breaking ground as the first woman owner of a major-market station, and she had the luck of good timing. The television industry was entering a period of radical transformation, which would dramatically increase the value of independent television stations, even those with a weak UHF frequency. In 1983, John Kluge’s powerful Metromedia chain, looking for a place in the booming Dallas market, purchased KNBN for fifteen million dollars, and Nolanda Hill was suddenly a broadcasting mogul.

The year she sold the station, Hill was invited to Washington to help organize a symposium on “American Women in the Telecommunications Marketplace,” conducted by the Federal Communications Commission. “I have a lot of money now,” she told the gathering, “but I didn’t marry any, I didn’t inherit any, and I never slept with any, as far as I know. But the men in every one of those categories are now in pretty good shape.” She got some laughs with the line, but only those who were familiar with the entanglements of Nolanda’s personal life (she’d made two husbands rich) took the full meaning. When she had been trying to find financing to acquire and develop her Dallas station, in the nineteen-seventies, Nolanda had hired a young attorney with ties to the banking industry; in exchange for his help, she gave him a fifteen-per-cent stake in her company. Along the way, she

and the lawyer, Billy Hill, Jr., became romantically involved, and in 1976 Nolanda divorced her mentor, Sheldon Turner, and married Hill. But Turner also had a stake in the television station, a fact that put Nolanda at the center of a business partnership with her husband and her ex. The two men were friendly, but in a way that made the arrangement even trickier: together, they held a controlling stake in the station that Nolanda had built. This was made dismayingly clear to Nolanda during the sale of KNBN, when the two men joined forces and opposed her position; she had wanted to hold on to the station, which was just nearing profitability, until its value increased, but her husband and her ex-husband prevailed, and initially agreed to a price she considered too low. In the end, she conducted negotiations with Kluge personally, and came away with a sale price that was several million dollars higher than that which Turner and Billy Hill had been prepared to accept. All three partners got rich on the deal; Nolanda gave control of her share to Billy to invest.

Although Nolanda plainly relished her role as a woman succeeding in an industry dominated by men, she was not motivated by a feminist impulse; on the contrary, there was a distinctly old-school aspect to her career—marrying the boss, yielding control, joking about her fate at the hands of men. At the time, she drew no particular lesson from her experience with Sheldon Turner and Billy Hill. The complexity of her relationships with the two men seemed natural enough; she bonded with men in a way she never had with other women. Years later, she would conclude that there was something unhealthy about how her relationships with men mixed up business with pleasure. But by then her life had long since become inseparably entangled with that of Ron Brown.

HILL is now living full time in Dallas again, after commuting to Washington for twelve years, and she says she is relieved to be away from the maelstrom of the capital. In a series of conversations over the last several weeks, she talked about her life with Ron Brown, the difficulties their relationship posed, and the numerous unresolved controversies that attended his tenure as Commerce Secretary. The shadow of further Justice Department inquiry lingers. Though the independent counsel targeting Brown and



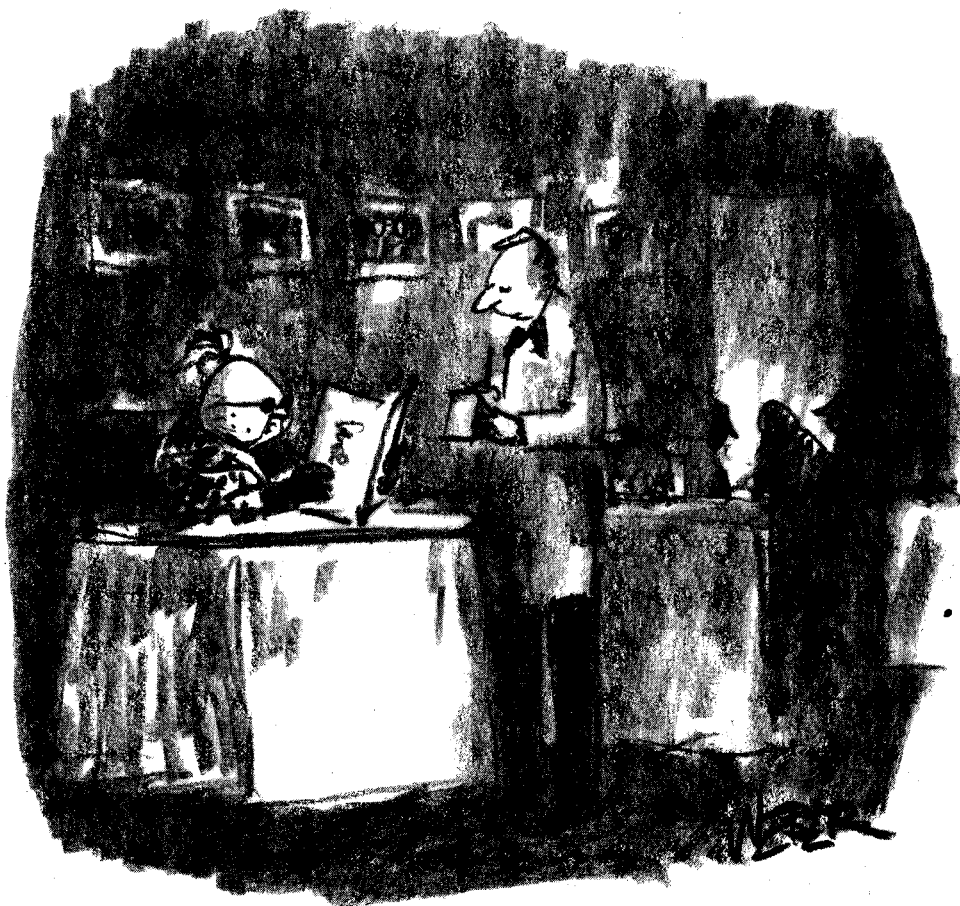
Hill closed his investigation after the Secretary's death, he turned his files over to the Justice Department. The criminal inquiry into Hill now appears to be open-ended, including not only her involvement with Brown but her broader business dealings. A grand jury has been receiving evidence in the case, but Hill says that neither she nor her attorney, Stephan Charles, has been given an indication as to the subject of the investigation.

Hill no longer rides the Harleys, but at fifty-two she still makes a striking impression: she wears a dinobone bracelet with her St. John's knits, smokes a cigar with her after-dinner Maker's Mark, and cusses like a roughneck. Her laugh, displayed often, is the high trill of a girl; and she has kept her looks, her face defiantly unsubjected to cosmetic repair. Her observations on Washington are unsparing, on subjects ranging from the Clintons ("President Clinton and President Clinton") to Vernon Jordan ("His rainbow coalition starts and stops with Vernon Jordan") to Washington women ("They're very provincial. . . . The real movers and shakers who are women are not in Washington—Washington women are appendages"). When reflecting on Ron Brown, she is alternately angry, funny, and tearfully sentimental. "He was my best friend," she says. "I was his lover, but I was his pal."

Hill's version of events, of course, is open to dispute. Brown "apparently confided in her, and it doesn't surprise me that she has a lot of things to say," said one member of his circle, who, expressing the view of many, added, "The problem is, does she embellish?" Nevertheless, most of her story was confirmed by others who knew her and Ron Brown well.

It was her husband Billy Hill who brought Ron and Noland together, albeit inadvertently. On the 1983 trip to Washington, when Noland helped organize the symposium, Billy took her along on a visit to his old University of Texas Law School pal Joe Reeder, a lawyer at the high-powered firm of Patton, Boggs & Blow (now called Patton Boggs). While the two friends were visiting, Noland wandered off down a hallway and bumped into Brown, a forty-two-year-old partner at the firm.

Partnership in Patton Boggs was an insignia that said much about Brown. The firm was the apotheosis of connectedness;



"I'll have the weirdo's lunch."

one of its name partners, Tommy Boggs, was a member of American political royalty, being the son of two former members of Congress, Hale and Lindy Boggs, and the brother of the Washington media star Cokie Roberts. But Patton Boggs was not only foremost among the elite of Washington's K Street lobbying industry; it was also a place so identified by intramural competitiveness that its unofficial byword became "You eat what you kill." The firm was the perfect setting for Brown, who in 1981, after spending his early career at the Urban League and as a Senate aide to Ted Kennedy, was eager to make some big money. He was the first black partner at a firm that had a distinctly Southern ethos but where pioneer status counted not nearly as much as big billings. Brown was expected to attract high-end clients, which he did (Sony among them), but he also showed a willingness to take on clients whom others couldn't, or wouldn't, get near—such as the government of Haiti's dictator Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier. Brown's style was not that of the standard Washington lob-

byist but that of the backroom facilitator: he knew how to bring together people and circumstances in ways that were profitable to all parties, including him. If the right deal presented itself outside the bounds of Patton Boggs, Brown was game for that, too. His ready smile and calculating eye contributed to a personal magnetism that opened doors for him.

"Are you new here?" Brown asked Noland on the day of their first meeting, apparently mistaking her for a lawyer or a secretary. But, overcome by what she describes as an instant attraction, she said nothing, and retreated to Reeder's office. "I knew instinctively that this person could be the most powerful influence in my life," Hill says. As it happened, there was ample opportunity to test that instinct. At the time, Hill was managing a UHF station in Boston, and was piecing together a deal to purchase the station and another one, in Washington, in the name of a company she would call Corridor Broadcasting. With the acquisition and startup of Channel 50, the Washington station, Hill became embroiled in costly



litigation with program syndicators, among others. Joe Reeder became her lawyer, and her ongoing battles required her to spend so much time at Patton Boggs that she eventually had her own desk at the firm, and the managing partner assumed at one point that she was a lawyer herself. Hill basically set up shop in Washington, commuting to Dallas on some weekends to see her husband and her young son, Andrew. While Nolanda was gone, Billy Hill and an assortment of female relatives took care of Andrew. "I was always there," Billy says. "My practice was structured to avoid travel. . . . That started when he was in the fourth grade."

In the course of her legal ordeals, Hill developed an intense friendship with Brown. Others in the Patton Boggs office noticed the constant exchange of phone calls between the two and the intimate familiarity of their interaction. "There was always a very strong chemistry that everybody could see," she says, but for the first few years their relationship was platonic. Hill says that Brown regularly flirted with her, and she responded teasingly (baking cookies for the firm, giving him a volume of Emily Dickinson), but he used discretion as their relationship developed. Hill says that although Brown had a reputation as a ladies' man, he worried that his partners at Patton Boggs would not condone an interracial affair, even if he was one of their star lawyers. For several years,

Nolanda says, Brown did not come to her hotel rooms or spend time alone with her in her apartment. "The ability to develop the friendship sans sex, where there was a really strong attraction, gave the relationship the depth that it had," she says.

There seems to have been very little about their lives that Hill and Brown did not share with one another, and Brown increasingly relied on Hill not only for business advice but for political counsel. "Ron was very, very compartmentalized, the most I've ever seen in anybody," she says. "If that was the compartment, that was the compartment—it didn't bleed. I got into all the compartments." Hill says that despite Brown's rising status among the Washington elite he often felt like an outsider. She did not hesitate to advise him even on matters on which her opinion was not solicited, such as his reputation as a philanderer. "I stayed on him about it," she says. "From my perspective, he had a lot of talent, he had a lot going for him. He needed to stay away from the reputation of Jesse Jackson and Martin Luther King, which I'd tell him all the time. Back when we were first becoming really good friends, and I'd see him somewhere [with a woman], the next day I'd say, 'Ron, you've got a zipper problem here, kid.'"

"I think that if she wasn't his best friend, she was close to it," one member of Brown's circle said. "She was honest with him. She was one of the few people

that could put him in his place when he needed to be."

Although Hill's Corridor Broadcasting spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on legal bills at Patton Boggs, Brown did not work on the account for the firm, and Hill came to realize that it was just as well. "You've got to remember, Ron Brown had been, in every sense of the word, a bagman as an attorney," Hill says. "He did backroom deal-making."

Brown demonstrated his penchant for being a fixer when Hill needed help with her Washington television station. According to Hill, her hopes for Channel 50 depended upon the building of a new transmission tower, but she was repeatedly denied permission by the District of Columbia. She turned for help to

Brown, who was connected in the District; he first advised her to "work within the system" and "scratch the right back" in order to get things done. She had already hired the daughter of a prominent official, but she refused to go further, she says. Brown then offered his consulting services to Hill, proposing that he use his influence to "grease the problem for Channel 50" in exchange for a fee to be paid to him directly and not reported to Patton Boggs. Hill says she declined; she figured out a way to install the tower without the District's approval by erecting a new structure on the old tower's base and calling it an "enhancement." According to Hill, it was the only time she ever asked Brown for professional help, and he failed her. And he had asked her for money, introducing into their relationship a mercenary aspect that would ultimately bring them to grief.

Brown's talent for behind-the-scenes maneuvering and his instinct for knowing when and where to apply "grease" served him well in politics, too. Late in the 1988 Presidential campaign, Jesse Jackson asked Brown to join his team and to run the Convention. The request posed a particular challenge to Brown. Jackson's presence as a candidate excited black voters and gave him clout with the national Party, but the conventional wisdom was that Jackson wielded too much power and was partly to blame for a leftward pull that had

proved disastrous for Democrats in Presidential elections. Brown's acceptability to the Democratic center was his principal asset, according to Willie Brown, the California politician who co-managed the Jackson campaign and was a friend of Brown's. "Ron Brown had the exact missing element in the Jesse Jackson campaign—and that was the respectability and the stability of being a mainstream African-American Democrat," Brown, who is now San Francisco's mayor, recalls. "He had been a Kennedy person, close to Cuomo, and he'd been an establishment Washington lawyer, all of which was the opposite of anything Jackson had, strength-wise."

Going into the 1988 Democratic Convention, in Atlanta, Jackson cherished an outside hope of landing a spot on the ticket as Michael Dukakis's running mate; but Dukakis not only didn't choose Jackson—he picked Lloyd Bentsen, without even informing Jackson, who heard about the decision from reporters. Jackson was furious, and raised the possibility of a defection.

"When we got to the Convention, the Dukakis people seemed to be in such a daze," Jackson recalls. "They never did really reach out to build upon our campaign as a way of broadening the base of *their* campaign." It was left to Brown to negotiate a truce between the Dukakis and the Jackson camps, and he succeeded; Dukakis and the Party got a cooperative Jackson, and Jackson got a place on prime time.

Hill couldn't stay away from Atlanta; she flew down and back in the same day, spending an hour with Brown in a hotel room, where, she maintains, they talked about Jackson and recited the Lord's Prayer. "It was at that Convention that Ron first saw that he actually had talent," Hill says. "Before, he had seen himself as glib and cool and pretty smart. But now Ron really was enjoying having the opportunity to be viewed as the savior of the Convention."

The Convention transformed Ron Brown into a national figure. After another landslide Presidential defeat, Democrats considered it an asset that Brown was viewed as a black leader more tractable than Jesse Jackson, and Brown decided to run for the Party chairmanship. Hill says she strongly counselled against it. "I thought that he needed to spend the next four years making money," she says. "He's looking at Chuck Manatt, he's looking at Paul Kirk"—former Democratic Party chairmen—"he's looking at all these guys who used their position to become incred-

ibly wealthy. When I was saying, 'You need more footing before you go do this,' his argument was 'This will be my footing.'" Brown went ahead, and Noland ended up contributing to his campaign for the chairmanship.

As a candidate to lead the Democratic National Committee, Brown saw some disadvantage in his association with Jackson, and he began to distance himself, repeatedly declaring, "I am my own man." Jackson, not surprisingly, resented Brown's efforts to "mainstream" his image. "It was unnecessary," Jackson says now. "His strength came not because historical Democrats liked him but because the new Democrats and our movement had enough strength to put delegates on the floor. He was a product of our movement . . . but the Democrats worked feverishly on this 'distancing' thing."

Brown campaigned hard for the job, especially in the South, and on February 10, 1989, he was chosen as the first black leader of a national political party—the climax of his career. That night, he celebrated at a bash for three hundred at the Ritz-Carlton, and he did not ask Noland Hill to attend. That decision was the turning point in their relationship, which she insists was still platonic. "He said that it was the most important event of his life, and that he had to be good, and that if I was sitting there he would be distracted,"

Hill recalls. "I didn't buy that package. He swore to me that it was the truth, and I swore to him that it was because he didn't like to be in the same place with me and Alma. And so it pissed me off. And I mean, pissed me off, because I had worked damned hard and put a lot of myself into his getting elected. And I felt that it was mean-spirited of him and selfish. And he'd had me hidden for so long."

To make amends, Brown sent a dozen pink roses to Hill's apartment in Washington, and another dozen to her at Patton Boggs, neither of which she acknowledged. She ignored his telephone messages and gave instructions to her husband, Billy, back in Dallas, that if Ron Brown called she was not available. Finally, Hill says, Brown confronted her at his former law firm.

"And he says, 'So what do I have to do?'" Hill recalls. "And I said, 'You have to take me to the most high-visibility restaurant in Washington, D.C., and I'll choose it.'"

They made a date for dinner on the first night they both had free, which happened to be Valentine's Day. Noland chose Tiberio, a favorite with Washington insiders and a place where they were certain to be observed. "And so there we are, in Tiberio's on Valentine's Day, and we are the only multiracial couple in there," Hill recalls. "There are a lot of black couples, there are a lot of white cou-



Shanahan

"So, let's catch a wellness wave!"

ples. And then there is Nolanda Hill and Ron Brown. That was the price he had had to pay for not allowing me to go to his acceptance speech." It was an edgy evening, though. After they sat down, Brown received word that he had an urgent message at his Party office from Jesse Jackson. He dispatched his driver, who returned with a long letter from Jackson. As Hill remembers the letter, Jackson thought that Brown had seemed a bit too enthusiastic about distancing himself from Jackson, who had, after all, given Brown his chance in Atlanta, and he conveyed this view in unsparing language. "It blessed him out," Nolanda recalls. "It said that he, Jesse Jackson, had taken a risk to have Ron involved with him, and then put all his eggs in Ron's basket, and that it was a fine how-do-you-do for Ron to forsake him, and besides Ron forsaking him he had forsaken his entire race, and on, and on, and on, for, like, three pages, single-spaced."

Jackson acknowledges sending the letter, saying he wanted only to remind Brown that separating black leaders into those who are more and less acceptable "is an ancient divide-and-conquer manipulation by oppression forces."

Brown read the letter, turning each page over to Hill as he finished it. Nolanda's vengeance dinner was a bust. "The food got served to us, and by now we've decided that we're going to leave," she says. "I mean, we were uncomfortable. People were staring at us. You know, it was just getting worse and worse. It was as much punishment for me as it was for him."

Brown and Hill left the restaurant, but when they got outside another surprise awaited: Brown's limousine was there, but his driver—a supporter of Jackson—was nowhere to be found; he'd quit. Hill climbed into the back seat of the limo and Brown got behind the wheel, insisting that she sit up front with him. They ended up at her apartment. This time, she says, Brown followed her inside.

As countless politicians have discovered, the logistics of managing a Washington affair can be a challenge, and Hill believes that the fact that she is white made her relationship with Brown especially hazardous for him, particularly within his own community. "There's a real, real strong black women's network in Washington, and Alma Brown was part of that," Hill says. "A black man can screw a black woman every day of his life and they will kind of look the other way. But

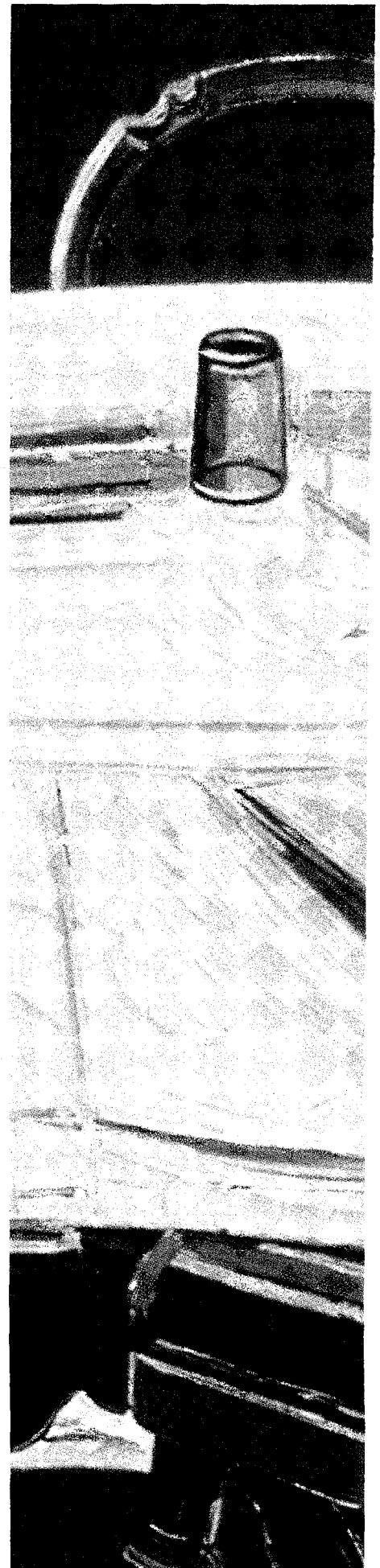
let him get with a white woman and, man, does it come down on her!" Indeed, Willie Brown says that among Brown's black social group Hill "was not a blip, not a blip. . . . Ron Brown made sure that she simply did not register, perception-wise—he was very careful about that."

With the exception of missing the election party, Hill says, she did not mind being excluded from the public aspects of Brown's official life. "I didn't miss going to all that stuff, because I so loved being with him," she says. "We enjoyed each other's company so much that we didn't want to share time when we had it. So, in terms of the public perks . . . I've sat next to Lloyd Bentsen all I need to in my life." However, Hill jealously guarded that portion of Brown's time which was hers, and certain of Brown's aides, such as his drivers, became familiar with what she called the Miss Hill Rule—her insistence that if Brown was more than an hour late for an appointment with her their date was off.

HILL says that she and Brown built their own parallel life in the margins of his acknowledged life. He often came to her apartment after work, and she'd make him a scrambled-egg sand-

GHOST STORIES

In the demure, fastidious paintings of the young Welsh artist Julie Roberts, solitary objects—a papal throne, a straitjacket, the desk of Sigmund Freud—and sinister tableaux hover like ghosts in the center of large, disturbing color fields. Four empty bowls and an empty tureen adorn an abandoned dining-room table in "Crime of Passion"; the body of a young girl lies crumpled on the carpet. The detail at the right is from "Séance," which, with its toppling chairs and table, suggests a frozen moment of psychic terror. Roberts's interests are in the body and in the constraints imposed by institutions—familial, medical, religious. "I am not an atheist," she has said. "I have often been asked if my work is secular or not. I feel that even in the mortuary-slab/operating-table paintings there has always been a reference to the altarpiece—and to the sacrifice." A selection of her new works is on view at the Sean Kelly gallery, in SoHo, through July 3rd.





wich. They took long drives. She prevailed upon him on numerous occasions to consult her spiritualist, a Native American medicine man named Dude Perry, who made a medicine pouch (containing an arrowhead, a feather, and a half-smoked cigarette) that Brown carried with him. Brown also met Nolanda's mother and sisters, in Texas, and he introduced Hill to his mother, as his business partner. Hill took an increasingly active role in Brown's financial life, even putting his daughter, Tracey, and his daughter-in-law, Tamara, on her companies' payrolls.

Hill refused to accompany Brown on his many trips overseas, but when he travelled in the States, she says, they tried to arrange their schedules so that they could be together on the road. There were awkward moments, such as the time she accompanied him to his alma mater, Middlebury College, where he was attending a board meeting: "I was very nervous, because, you know, in Vermont black and white is supposed to be on cows." Or the time last year they rendezvoused in a hotel suite in New York, where Brown, who was by then the Commerce Secretary, was meeting with publishing executives. At six o'clock in the morning, Hill says, they were awakened by activity in their outer room; Brown went to investigate, and returned with the news that his staff had failed to book a separate room for his breakfast meeting, which was being set up right then in the other half of their suite. Hill says that she had to wait out the meeting hidden in the bedroom.

In 1990, Brown named Hill to the D.N.C.'s site-selection committee, which was charged with finding a host city for the 1992 national Convention. One of her companies was hired to produce a short film biography of Brown for the Convention. Hill had been politically active in Texas and was a generous donor to various Democratic candidates, and her D.N.C. activities gave her reason to spend time in Brown's sphere. When they weren't together, they were on the telephone, so much so that each of their families came to expect (and, in Billy Hill's case, to resent) the late-night calls. "Oh, he called me anytime, all the time," Nolanda says. "He would talk to me in his bedroom, toward the last few years. He'd talk to me in front of the children, and then he would go downstairs to the basement where his couch was,

and he would call me from there. And sometimes we talked for hours." Often, the calls were rancorous. "We had a very passionate relationship," Hill says, "and therefore there was a lot of 'I never want to see, speak, or hear from you again.' We fought as much as we loved. Sometimes more. And everyone who knew us was aware of the fights as well."

None of this was helpful to either of their marriages, of course, and Hill says that Brown told her that Alma, who had lived for years with rumors of his womanizing, worried about his relationship with Hill. "According to him, she had never displayed really feeling threatened until me," Hill says. The situation in the Hill household was even more tense. On the rare occasions when she was home, Brown was on the telephone—much to Billy Hill's annoyance. Nolanda says she believes that Billy suspected the affair from that Valentine's night: he had tried to reach her at her Washington apartment and she didn't return his calls until the next day. "It was too late to call him when Ron left," she says. "And so, when I called early the next morning, he said, 'You had dinner with Ron Brown last night.' He said, 'Great. I bet that made his wife feel great. Valentine's Day.' He said, 'Don't you have more respect for yourself than that?'"

Billy says that he never wanted Nolanda to stay in the television business, and that he had always hated her separations from him and Andrew. "I wanted her to raise her kid," he says. It did not help when he began to hear rumors about his wife. "Some fairly prominent people in Washington conveyed the existence of this affair to me," he says. "But even that was not the point as much as the abandonment, the absence. It caused two completely different lives."

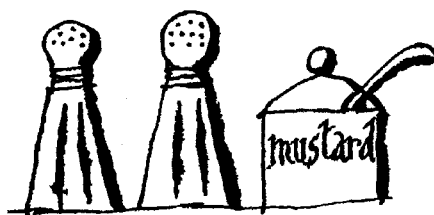
IN 1989, the Democratic Party was foundering. Its Presidential candidate had suffered a humiliating defeat, and the Party, always behind the Republicans in fund-raising, was strapped. Ron Brown had campaigned effectively to win the job of D.N.C. chairman, but there were lin-

gering doubts among many Democrats, including some key Jewish supporters who were still wary of Jesse Jackson on account of his "Hymietown" remark, in 1984. It was not clear from Brown's early actions as chairman that he was steering the Party away from the Jackson wing. As his chief of staff he chose Alexis Herman (the current Labor Secretary), a hugely successful minority-hiring expert who Hill says was a close friend of Alma Brown's. ("Alexis Herman made a living at playing the race card," Hill says.)

Former heads of the Party had come to the job with connections to money sources; Brown, however, was not yet fully established in the financial world or as well positioned on corporate boards as his friend Vernon Jordan. Although Pamela Harriman was an early supporter of Brown, many of the old-line Democratic powers, such as the former chairman Robert Strauss, were not, and this forced Brown to look to new sources of money. He aggressively solicited participation and donations from Asian-Americans, a group whose sudden emergence in Democratic politics has attracted questions in the current campaign-finance scandals.

Hill and Brown, during their weekend in Vermont, spent hours discussing financial strategies for the Party. Hill says she convinced Brown that he needed someone on his staff who could reach out beyond his political constituency. "You've got to get yourself a cute, smart, politically connected, single Jewish woman to be your finance director," Hill says she advised Brown. "I said, 'You've got to have somebody who can get entrée to that big Jewish middle, because in their eyes you are Jesse Jackson.'" Hill says that she suggested Melissa Moss, who was then working at the Democratic Leadership Council, a conservative wing that was trying to shift the Party back toward the center. Although Brown deeply disliked the D.L.C., which he saw as a right-wing splinter group hostile to the Party's principles, he hired Moss.

Brown managed to reenergize the Democratic Party, and he promised to deliver the next President of the United States—despite George Bush's intimidating standing in opinion polls after the Gulf War. But the candidates did not look exciting. The front-runner was Bill Clinton, and, as Hill puts it, "Bill Clinton wasn't Ron Brown's guy."

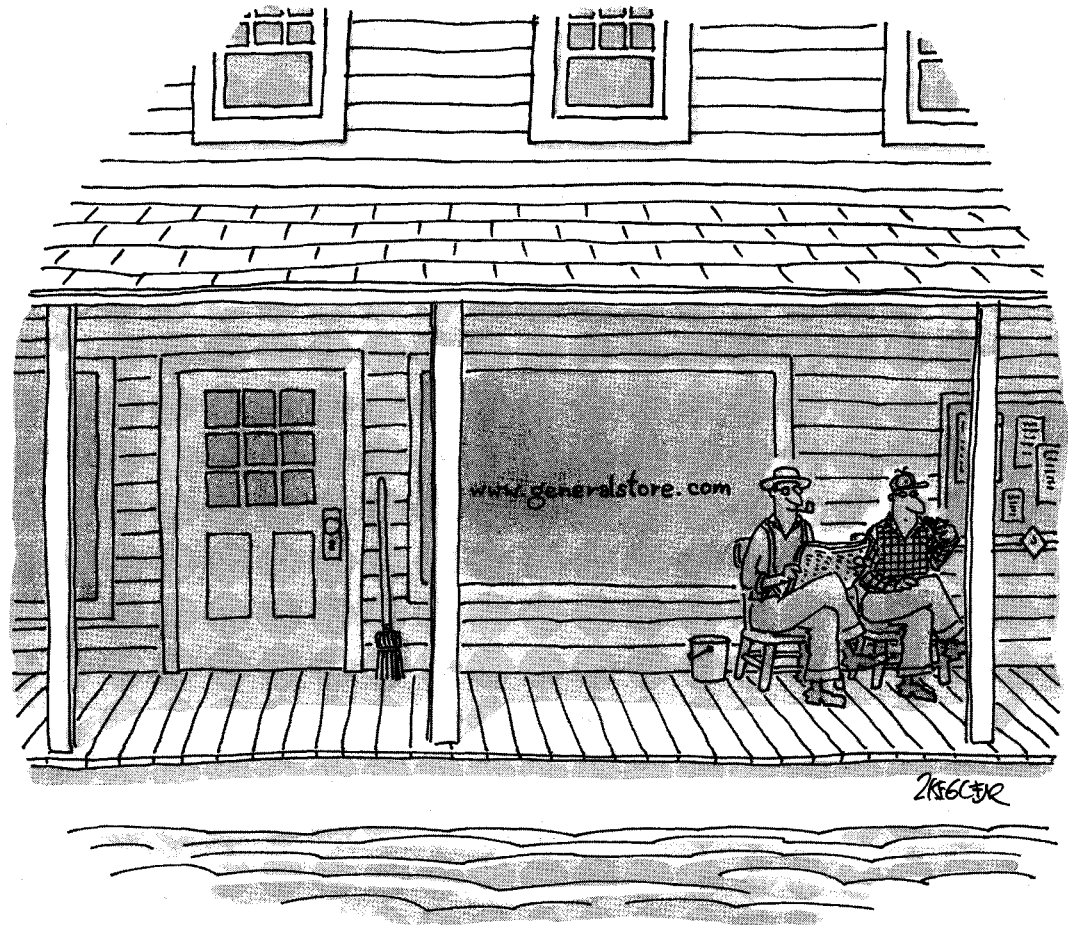


For one thing, Clinton had declined to endorse Brown when he was running for Party chairman. Also, as a founding member and head of the Democratic Leadership Council, Clinton, who knew the political power of the public gesture, had in 1991 refused to allow Jesse Jackson to address the group—earning a scolding from both Jackson and Brown. Brown, Hill says, found it hard to forgive Clinton for his association with the D.L.C. “He saw it as a bastard organization that shouldn’t exist, that it was disloyal, that it fractionalized the Party, and he held it against Bill Clinton more than anything,” she says. “And it was visceral, because he so disliked him. He felt that he”—Clinton—“was a traitor because of the D.L.C.”

Though Brown eventually came to like Clinton and to respect his intellect, Hill says his antipathy lasted well after Clinton’s nomination in 1992. On the night Clinton won the votes that he needed to clinch the nomination, Brown was watching the returns at Hill’s apartment. “I can see exactly where he was standing,” she says. “I’d given him these suspenders that had little donkeys on them. He was in front of the mirror putting his arms in his braces, and then he said, ‘If there had been forty-four candidates, that motherfucker would have been my forty-fifth choice.’”

Hill says that Brown didn’t like Clinton’s “Arkansas mafia,” and that he didn’t hold Al Gore in much higher regard—“He thought he was plastic.” Brown told Hill that he felt like “the house nigger.” He was a passenger on one leg of the famous Clinton-Gore campaign bus trip, and it did little to alleviate his doubts. “It was in the South, which is of course a perfect place for your black guy,” Hill says. “He told me they put him on that bus in the South, and they relegated him to the back of the bus.”

Even after the election, there was much about the Clinton atmospherics that made Brown uneasy—New Age-y rap sessions late into the night, and the

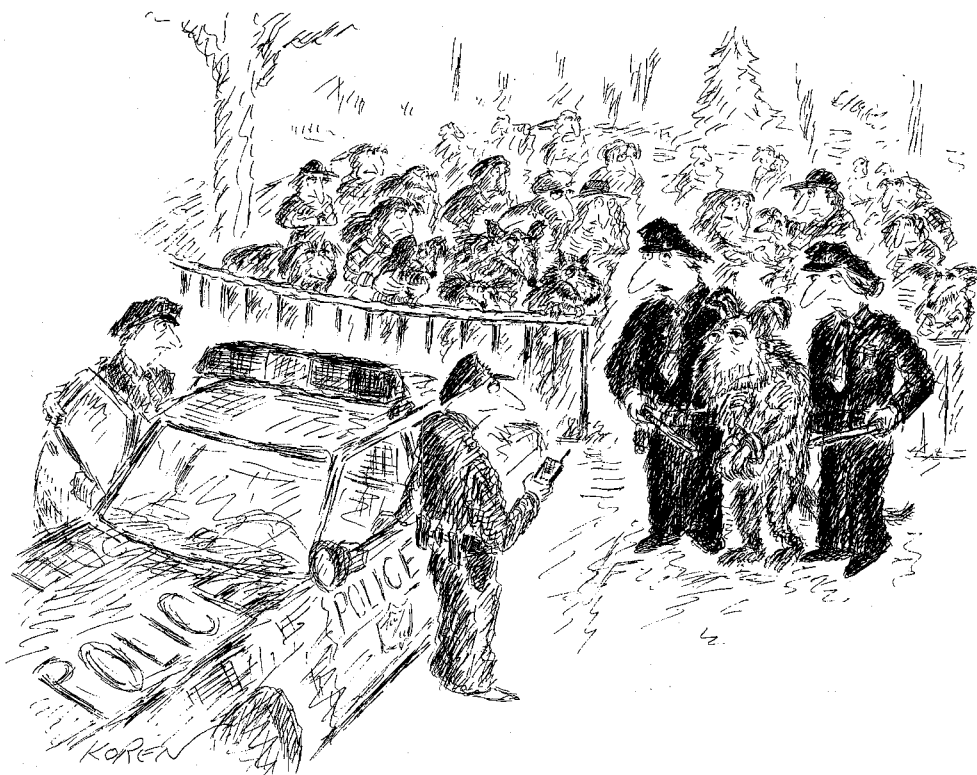


like. “Ron knew he wasn’t an insider-insider,” Hill says. “And the touchy-feely part—Ron is not a touchy-feely person, not at all. This pop-psychology shit, he hated it. ‘Moongazing,’ he called it.” Brown was particularly put off by an orientation retreat that the Clintons held for the new Cabinet, at Camp David. Brown was not given to riding in government vans. Nolanda was in California attending a Super Bowl party, and she says Brown called her several times to complain, once making her listen to the loud snoring of his roommate for the get-together, Les Aspin. “He’s at Camp David with these professors, these gurus, who are standing up about how to interact with each other, and there was somebody whose book Hillary had read, and he’s teaching them how to feel and sense and do whatever. And Ron was just absolutely beside himself. ‘What a fucking waste of fucking time!’ he said. And they had to eat cafeteria style—everything he hates.”

One of the reasons Clinton won the election in 1992 was that Jesse Jackson did not run in the primaries and grudgingly

granted his support to the Clinton campaign. “But it cost money,” Hill says. “Jesse didn’t come free.” Hill says that one evening during the ’92 campaign Brown arrived at her house in a foul mood because he had just been told how much Jackson’s support would cost. “The Rainbow Coalition got paid to consult and work with the Clinton campaign,” she says. “I know they got a million dollars. Jesse had said what it was going to cost. Ron took his doctor’s bag and went to where Jesse was.” Jackson doesn’t deny that money changed hands, but he says that Hill’s account misconstrues the longtime understanding he has with the Democratic Party, by which Jackson undertakes a large-scale voter-registration-and-turnout campaign, and the Party picks up the tab, through Jackson’s Operation Push, “or whatever apparatus I’m working through.”

“If I’m going to spend full time, from Labor Day to November, on voter registration and voter turnout, you need an infrastructure,” Jackson says. “That requires some staff, some resources, some scheduling. That’s what’s meant by Jesse



"The charge is sexual misconduct in the dog run."

don't come free.' I can't go to three cities in a day on commercial, for example. That is critical to understand." Jackson says that he personally receives no pay for these efforts. "I've never taken a single dime as a per diem to do that voter-registration, voter-turnout work, because I never want the appearance of a money tradeoff to cloud the motives of my mission."

ALTHOUGH Brown wasn't an early Bill Clinton admirer, he rejoiced in the Clinton-Gore triumph in 1992 and justifiably accepted a good portion of the credit for it. When the time came for the President to dispense Cabinet posts, Brown hoped for State, but, getting no positive signs from Clinton, he began to worry that he might not make the Cabinet at all. "Up until the moment that Ron was offered Commerce, he didn't really think he was going to get a Cabinet position," Hill says, adding that he "wanted it more than anything in the world."

Hill, however, had hoped he wouldn't make the cut, and when he was named Commerce Secretary she says she tried to talk him out of accepting it. "I felt like he had too much baggage," she says, referring to his many unconventional business

arrangements, including business arrangements he had made with her. Events would prove her worries justified; Brown's business deals were the subject of congressional inquiry from the time of his Senate confirmation process for Commerce until his death, when an independent counsel was investigating him for misrepresenting his personal finances.

Brown depended on Hill for her shrewd advice, and she knew virtually everything about his deals. That's why Administration officials called on Hill when they were guiding Brown through the confirmation process. They believed she could explain the complicated financial arrangements he had set up to supplement his income.

Brown had made a good living at Patton Boggs in the nineteen-eighties, but, Hill says, he felt driven to bring in more. He was putting both his daughter, Tracey, and his son, Michael, through law school, and he had several other hefty obligations, including mortgages on various properties. He also envied the high incomes earned by some of his friends, such as Vernon Jordan. But the deals that came Brown's way had less to do with his investment acumen than with the fact

that he was Ron Brown, connected guy. One of his most lucrative arrangements—and one that the Senate Commerce committee insisted he terminate before becoming Commerce Secretary—was with a Columbus, Ohio, corporation called PEBSCO, which specialized in providing supplemental retirement programs to government workers. In 1984, Brown got an insurance license and began using his connections to help win PEBSCO contracts with various city governments, some of which had policies giving favorable consideration to bids from minority contractors that same year. Brown incorporated a company called Capital/PEBSCO and set himself up as PEBSCO's minority-contractor in Washington, D.C. He had no particular expertise in selling supplemental retirement programs, but he needed none; his role was to connect with District officials. It was a sweet deal, a contract that Nolanda claims was won and renewed with a little help from Alexis Herman

when she was a minority-hiring consultant, and it paid Brown several thousand dollars a month.

In 1993, when the Commerce committee insisted that he terminate the PEBSCO arrangement before becoming Commerce Secretary, it was Hill, his de-facto business adviser, who negotiated a divestment package with PEBSCO. Brown was paid seven hundred and one thousand dollars.

Brown made it through the confirmation process, thanks in part to Hill's help. But even after he became Secretary new controversies arose to cloud his reputation. One of his dealings became sensationally public in 1993, when a Vietnamese immigrant living in southern Florida told the F.B.I. that he had been party to a deal between Brown and an agent for the Vietnamese government, by which Brown agreed to try to influence the United States to normalize relations with Hanoi. Brown was to receive seven hundred thousand dollars for his efforts, said the informant, who passed an F.B.I. lie-detector test. Brown denied the story, and said that he had never met with the Vietnamese. When he was subsequently confronted with evidence to the contrary—he had met with them at least

three times, including once inside the Commerce Department—Brown admitted that he did know the individuals involved, but said he had made no deal with them. A grand jury was convened, but the Justice Department dropped the case for lack of evidence. Hill says that Brown did explore a deal with the Vietnamese, whom he met through a Florida-based import-export merchant named Marc Ashton. “He said he made the agreement with them in Florida,” she says. “He would lobby to get the trade-restriction embargoes lifted. I mean, he knew what the deal was. . . . But he did leave himself an out. He said he wasn’t sure what they were going to be doing, but that he’d work with them if it turned out that he could. He was real interested. He needed income.” Hill says that Brown ultimately decided not to accept the deal because of obvious conflicts with his job at Commerce. But he was sore about losing the money.

Brown’s most audacious business venture, which attracted the attention of the Justice Department, was an apparent shell company he set up with Hill called First International. It began, Hill says, when Brown was still with the D.N.C., and she got a call from him one day in 1990 from Cairo. Brown had met someone from the Egyptian government who was looking for a communications company to set up a pay-television system, and he suggested that Hill pursue the deal for Corridor. If it worked out, he would share in the take. Hill created a new company for the venture, First International, and made Brown a full partner. The Egyptian deal fell through, and none of the other projects Brown and Hill explored—including deals involving Angolan oil and Polish poster art—worked out, either.

First International’s principal enterprise, as it turns out, was the enrichment of Ron Brown. Brown had always been tense about money, and his move into government had pinched his income substantially. He’d had to cash out his partnership at Patton Boggs, but the firm didn’t pay him nearly what he felt he was owed. Hill says she realized that First International would be severely limited in its overseas deal-making as long as the Secretary of Commerce was involved, and so she offered to buy Brown out for a hundred and forty-five thousand dollars; he wanted a million. In January, 1993, in his official financial disclosure, Brown listed his holding in First International as his

largest asset, counting its worth as being between five hundred thousand and a million dollars—an extraordinary assertion, given that he had invested nothing in the company, and that First International (basically just a space in Corridor’s offices) had completed not a single deal. Brown and Hill finally agreed on a payout of nearly five hundred thousand. Today, Hill acknowledges that Brown brought nothing to the company but himself. “Ron looked at it as anything he was around he brought intrinsic value to,” she says.

Hill’s costly acquiescence may have had a certain weird logic within the emotional contours of their relationship (Ron wanted the money, Nolanda gave it to him), but when it came to light, a year later, to congressional Republicans it looked like what Brown would call “grease.”

AROUND the time that Hill was scrambling to pay off Brown, her own business was coming apart. In the eighties, she had taken out more than twenty-six million dollars in loans, in the name of Corridor Broadcasting, to buy and upgrade her television stations in Boston and Washington, but the lenders went bust in the S. & L. crash. As a result, in 1988 the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Resolution Trust Corporation became Hill’s business partners, and, as things were turning out, it wasn’t a very good business. Hill had spent several years engaged in legal battles, which depleted Corridor’s resources. The Washington

Post reported that Hill was a drain on the company, too, charging Corridor for various company apartments in Washington (one costing six thousand dollars a month), and indulging her taste in furs and jewelry with company-financed shopping sprees. Hill denies that Corridor paid for any of her personal expenses, and says that she paid for all the company apartments herself. In 1993, after Corridor defaulted on its loans, the government took a twenty-three-million-dollar loss and sold Hill’s unpaid loans (and, effectively, her two stations) for \$3.2 million. Hill managed to hang on, in a fashion, persuading the new owner of the stations to allow Corridor to continue managing them.

Hill’s domestic life had been unraveling, too. Billy and Andrew saw less and less of Nolanda as she spent more time in Washington, and Billy was fed up. Although Nolanda never admitted her affair, in 1992, Billy says, he gave her an ultimatum: “I told her in March that I didn’t know what her relationship was with Ron Brown, but whatever it was it had to be perceptibly, visibly different in a public sense by the time Andrew got out of school that year, or I wasn’t going to stay around anymore.” When things didn’t change, Billy says, he filed for divorce. Billy had the advantage, and he hit hard, insisting on keeping the couple’s joint property in Texas, except for their house. Though technically they would have joint custody of Andrew, who was



“There’s a smidgen of Charlie Rose about you.”

now fourteen, Billy insisted that the boy remain with him. Nolanda, afraid that Billy would name Ron Brown as co-respondent in the divorce, agreed. She gave Andrew up. "It was a horrible time for Andrew," Nolanda says. Billy Hill agrees that the strains on the family and the eventual breakup hurt Andrew "probably more than I realized at the time."

In Washington, matters grew worse. A year after Brown's confirmation, Republicans on the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee began to investigate his business dealings, eventually focussing on his partnership with Hill. They claimed that in his financial disclosure Brown had misrepresented the payout he received from Hill for First International. Filing false disclosure reports is a federal crime, and two years after Brown was sworn in as Commerce Secretary the Justice Department started a preliminary investigation. William Clinger, a Republican congressman, demanded to know how Hill could afford

to pay Brown half a million dollars for his stake in First International when the company had no successful business deals. Clinger also wanted to know how much of the money that had gone to Brown came from the loan that Corridor had defaulted on—which was now costing taxpayers twenty-three million dollars. Clinger and his investigators believe that First International was plainly a front for Corridor. "I call Nolanda Hill a hustler," Clinger said recently. The inquiry drew attention to Hill, and the *Washington Post*, which uncovered much of the material about First International, published a series on Hill and her dealings with Brown. Several of Hill's former employees at the television stations provided stories about her extravagant life style, and some, Hill claims, fed Corridor documents to congressional-committee investigators.

Amid all the publicity, the new owner of Hill's TV stations fired her as manager. Feeling hounded and beaten, Hill

tried to hide from reporters and investigators, and even from her own lawyers. Then one day in January, 1995, at a moment when the *Post* was preparing a profile on her and congressmen were calling for an independent counsel, she broke down.

"She was very depressed, she was suicidal, she was overwhelmed with the idea that she was being attacked by the government, with unlimited financial resources," said Jay Seastrunk, a Dallas psychiatrist who treated Hill after her collapse, and agreed to be interviewed at her request. "She got to where she couldn't really concentrate, she couldn't sleep, she couldn't think. She was unable to really put things together in a logical manner and plan a course of action. She was unable to function, really." Hill says that she remembers speaking to Billy on the telephone from Washington, and she sounded so incoherent that he insisted she fly to Dallas; she met him and a lawyer friend at a Dallas country club, and doesn't remember anything else until she awoke three days later in a hospital. "I mean, I was just shell-shocked," she says. "I had put myself into a near-catatonic state."

After starting a course of intensive psychotherapy, Hill began to see a self-destructive pattern in her relationships with the powerful men who were her mentors. She felt guilt about Andrew, and how she had abandoned him. She was finally home in Dallas to stay, but Andrew was heading off to college.

ONE morning in May, 1995, a few months after her collapse, Hill was in Dallas in a conference with her attorney when she was interrupted by a call from Ron Brown. The subject was Attorney General Janet Reno. "That bitch has no balls," Hill quotes Brown as telling her. "She named us both targets in her request to the court for an independent-counsel investigation. . . . She stuck it to both of us."

Reno, pressed by Congress and by all the news stories about Hill and Brown's finances, had asked a federal appeals court to appoint an independent counsel to investigate Brown's statements on his financial disclosures, as well as his "acceptance of things of value" from Hill. Nolanda and Brown had expected Reno to take the action, but Hill says she was



"I voted for him because I like the hip way he wears his turban."

stunned to learn that she was named a target of the inquiry. Brown told Hill not to worry, but she began to sense that she might be heading for a serious fall. She says she began to consider her options, one of which included cooperating with the prosecutor in a case against Brown. As it happened, she believed she had just the information to trade.

The information involved a pair of Democratic fund-raisers from Hawaii named Gene and Nora Lum, who had met Brown in late 1991 and donated heavily to the Party through the 1992 Presidential campaign. The Lums' sudden emergence as important political donors was followed, in early 1994, by a mysterious transaction in the Oklahoma gas fields, by which the Lums made a quick profit of several million dollars. The couple continued their generosity with their new millions, even donating to Democratic politicians (including Ted Kennedy) in the name of others—a violation of federal law, for which they entered a plea arrangement with prosecutors last month. One of their first acts after the Oklahoma gas transaction was to put Michael Brown, Ron's son, on the board of their company, paying him seventy-five hundred dollars per month in consulting fees and giving him a five-per-cent stake that paid a hundred and sixty thousand dollars in dividends—even though he had no expertise in the gas business and had not even passed his bar exam. Investigators wanted to know whether the deal with Michael was an attempt to influence Ron Brown. Michael's lawyer, Bill Taylor, says that Michael did repay a loan of several thousand dollars to his father during this period, but insists that any suggestion that Michael served as a conduit for the Lums is a "damnable lie."

By last March, the independent counsel, Daniel Pearson, had convened a grand jury to investigate the Lums' gas windfall and their dealings with Michael Brown, and possibly with his father. Would Hill actually have cooperated in a case against Brown? Dr. Seastrunk, who was treating her at the time, says that Hill had come to realize how much her relationship with Brown had cost her, and was seriously weighing a dramatic break. "She was beginning to see it, and very definitely at times would see it strongly and be very angry and would say, 'I'm not going to protect him any-

more, I'm going to take care of myself.' And then the next minute, after talking to him, she would tend to get unconsciously sucked back in." Hill says, "I was torn between what this had done to my family and how much I loved them, and how much I loved Ron."

The last time Nolanda saw Ron Brown was in March of 1996. They met in Washington, to discuss, among other things, the matter of the impending criminal prosecution, and whether they would stand together or apart. Brown was uncertain about his future in politics; he had not been given a role in the Clinton-Gore reelection effort, and he talked of stepping down as Commerce Secretary.

A FEW weeks after the March meeting, Brown left on a trade mission to Bosnia and Croatia, accompanied by the chief executives of a dozen United States companies. The White House asked him to add a stop in Bosnia, a gesture to bolster the spirits of the American peacekeeping troops there and to remind the world of America's commitment. Hill says that he telephoned her from every stop on his journey, reassuring her. She says that Brown told her his visit to the troops in Bosnia was "the greatest thing I've ever done, and I'll tell you all about it. You'd have been so proud of me, sweet angel. I'll call you. I love you." Bang. And that's the last I ever heard."

Even though Hill knew her presence at the funeral would cause awkwardness, she felt compelled to attend. Had she not gone, she says, "I would have been waiting, as we sit here today, for him to call me. . . . I know my mind, and I would not have been able to convince myself he wasn't going to. I would have just denied it."

Hill flew alone from Dallas to Washington, where she stayed with Joe Reeder, the Patton Boggs lawyer who had introduced her to Brown, and his wife, Katharine Boyce. The funeral was composed of a series of events—a drive through black Washington neighborhoods led by the hearse, a memorial service at the National Cathedral, and a private burial at Arlington National Cemetery. Mourners were divided into a sort of A-list and a B-list, with those on the first list invited to attend all the events. Nolanda was included on the A-list.

On the day of the funeral, April 10th, the A-list convened near Ron Brown's house and boarded buses that drove them to the cathedral and the cemetery. Hill was to have gone with the Reeders, but she missed her ride, so she ended up taking the bus with relatives of Michael Brown's wife. The crowd at the National Cathedral included Marion Barry, Stevie Wonder, and Johnnie Cochran.

For a time, Hill thought that no one would stand near her. One person who was there said that people were afraid that she would break down and cause a scene. But she found Tommy Boggs, who allowed her to stand with him and his group, which included his sister, Cokie Roberts. "I didn't do very well," Hill says. "It was— It was hard. When I finally looked at the coffin and at the grave site—I lost it."

Looking back now, Hill says that she has come to see Brown's death as a deliverance for him. "It spared him a great deal of humiliation. He might have gone to jail, and he knew that." Dr. Seastrunk points out that it spared Hill, too. "She acknowledges that, really, it's the only way it could have ended, because if it hadn't ended, she was going to have to take him down."

Today, there is no life for Hill in Washington, and her connection with scandal has severed many of her business contacts elsewhere. Although she says she's done nothing illegal, she knows she may yet end up in jail for her financial maneuverings with Brown. Her life in Dallas is spent mostly in the company of her mother and her sisters. With Andrew, she has achieved a wobbly détente; there is lingering hurt, she says, "but we're friends. . . . We spend a lot of time on the phone, talking." She now says of her business partnership with Ron Brown, "I regret it more than anything else in my life"; but about the rest of her relationship with Brown she is unapologetic. And, while Hill's business opportunities are limited, the entrepreneurial urge persists. She is looking into a proposal to privatize a state-owned hemp factory in the Yucatan Peninsula ("they're finding all kinds of new uses for hemp"). And she speaks excitedly about plans to establish a home shopping channel in Mexico City. "I think there are real bright prospects," she says of this possibility. "I have an inside track with somebody." ♦



LETTERS

JUST BETWEEN COUSINS

The authors are distant relatives—with a connection to the Kennedys—and close friends. And they have written to each other about work, family, friends, and foes for more than forty years.

BY GORE VIDAL AND LOUIS AUCHINCLOSS

GORE VIDAL and Louis Auchincloss have carried on an epistolary conversation since they met in New York City in the early nineteen-fifties. Auchincloss, then in his mid-thirties, was practicing law and had recently published his first novel and his first volume of short stories. Vidal, who was eight years younger, had published six novels between 1946 and the end of 1950, including the 1948 best-seller *"The City and the Pillar."* The two writers soon became friends; in addition, Auchincloss has acted over the years as Vidal's lawyer. To their amusement, there was a tenuous family relationship between them: Vidal's mother's second husband was Hugh D. Auchincloss, one of Louis's cousins. They also shared a distant connection to the Kennedy clan: Hugh Auchincloss's third wife was Janet Bowvier, the mother of Jacqueline Bowvier Kennedy. These letters, written between 1952 and 1990, have been collected by Fred Kaplan, who is writing a biography of Vidal and preparing an edition of his correspondence.

New York City, April 7, 1952

DEAR GORE,

A line to say how much I liked "Er-linda and Mr. Coffin" [in "New World Writing"]. I've read all your books but this is my first meeting with you as a short-story author, and I am very proud to be bound with you in the same volume. Do ring me when in town next. Was in Washington last week for a week. Is it true your mother is going to marry Clark Gable? Everybody I know is getting so important.

Sincerely,
LSA

New York City, 1952

DEAR GORE:

You are a very good ex-step-cousin to have sent me your last ["The Judgment of Paris," a novel], and I have read its philo-

sophic, essentially eighteenth-century pages with considerable interest & enthusiasm. As I believe has been said of you, your fault is only in your plethora of gifts. The essay chapter on the copulation of heroes & heroines is to me a masterpiece (my characters rarely, if ever, copulate, which is perhaps reflected in my sales) and your narrative talent is delightfully shown in the tale of the would-be suicide, but is there any relation between the two other than the loose string of Philip's wanderings? Not that there should be, I hasten to add, for why should everything be tied up as in a Racine tragedy, and yet I can't but observe it as I feel the lurking classicist in you and wonder (in no way critically) if you do not intend your material to be more organized than it is. But this in no way diminishes my gratitude for Zoe and her "mignonne," for Mrs. Peabody, for the vulgar Egyptian hotel proprietor and for "Princess wants to sit down." I'm always interested when you're telling a story or when you're writing an essay; my only quibble with you is when you let your characters get into discussions and do your essay telling for you. The Russian novelists do this, but they only get away with it because there's a cult about them. Actually, I'd like to edit Turgenev without the discussions. If anyone could write discussions between characters, you could. My point is that nobody can. They cease to be characters when they talk about life. But that's just me.

Would Philip have been quite so preoccupied with homosexuals had he been as heterosexual as you depict him? Maybe so.

Sincerely,
LOUIS AUCHINCLOSS

Barrytown, New York, 1952

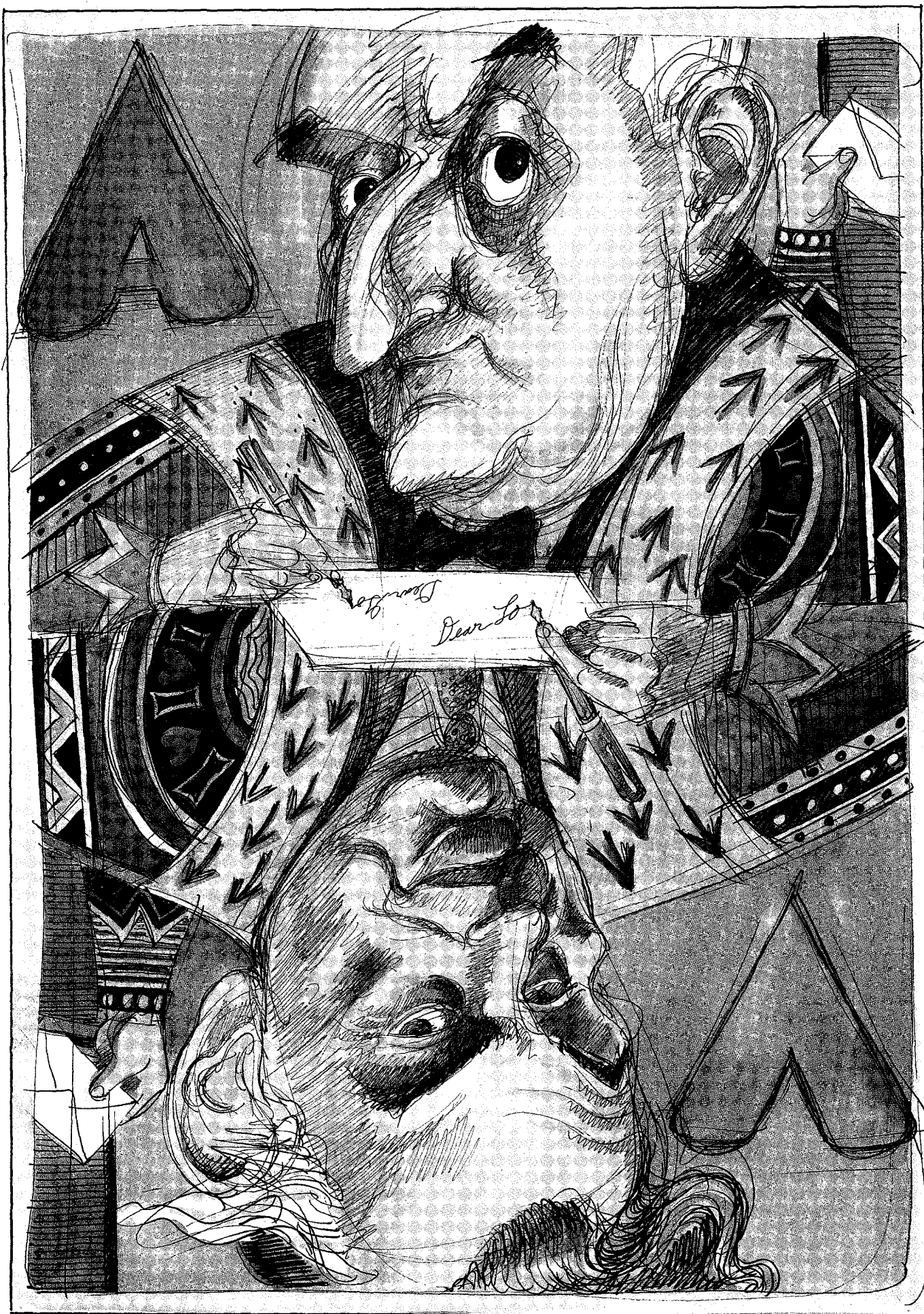
DEAR LOUIS,

What a pleasant letter! and most reassuring to read on the eve of what prom-

ises to be a mostly stormy publication. The Book-of-the-Month Club has announced that "Judgment" is the most disgusting novel to come their way in many years. . . . Orville Prescott [the *Times* book reviewer] has announced that he is made physically ill by the sight (not even the text) of a Gore Vidal novel. . . . Were it not for my faithful public of very sensitive youths I should probably be forced into an irritable retirement. Fortunately, there is a chance I shall sell a few copies of this new book and, all in all, after seven years of frivolous praise and dispraise I am made happiest, at the last, by a whopping advance sale. Brace yourself, cousin, for the dark days ahead. . . . This is a country of first novelists. The idea of a writer becoming a man of letters, geared to the long haul, is not only foreign but detestable to our nation, even smacking of degeneracy, as Orville would say.

As to your comments about the book, they are exactly right. It is a fault in verisimilitude, as Fay Peabody would say, to have my hero consort almost exclusively with pederasts; on the other hand, for that one season in Europe, I should say that any attractive young heterosexual of a serious nature would have to be extraordinarily strong and hearty to resist all traffic with the ubiquitous queens. As for having characters lecture on life, what a vice it is! and always unsatisfactory, even in the hands of Dr. Mann. Peacock and the early Huxley did it best and I, of course, like all semi-literates, am enormously staggered by the most spurious erudition, my own included. I see myself as an austere, eighteenth-century rationalist, composing epigrams and writing with consummate clarity of the eternal, deftly illustrated with balletistic plots . . . all very formal and shrewd. In actual fact, of course, I am in the great and slovenly tradition of the Anglo-American novel, a storyteller, relishing

EDWARD SOREL



grotesque situations which conceal an absolute confusion. . . .

GORE

Culver City, California
September 28, 1955

MY DEAR LOUIS,

I never read short stories in *The New Yorker* if I can help it though I do play the usual guessing game: who wrote this? [*The New Yorker* had no table of contents, and the author's name appeared only at the end of each article.] Solid text, no paragraphs, no dialogue: Jean Stafford or possibly Eudora Welty. Short little sentences, sometimes ungrammatical: McNulty or Salinger. Imagine then my surprise as I skimmed what looked to be a particularly tedious profile of a lawyer who, it would doubtless develop, was an amateur botanist, and came across the information that someone had dropped dead in a lawyer's office, which the character imparting the news thought to be terribly convenient. It could not be, I thought. Only two writers could have written that. One was I and the other, the other was Cousin Louis who had indeed struck again, wonderfully! I think it one of your best stories: unwavering, pitiless, pure in the absence of all compassion. I can hardly wait for the novel.

As for me, here I am. I have finished "The Catered Affair" and I am being tempted at the moment with "Captain Dreyfus" which the studio wants me to write and, if I decide to do it, I shall probably stay on until December. I can see, three thousand miles away, the delicate, knowing smile which at this moment flickers, as we novelists say, across your lips. Is the great American legend about to claim another sacrificial victim? Has the hereditary taint of the American man of letters asserted itself so fatally again? No. Tell it not in [Vance] Bourjaily's house nor publish it in Mailer's, but another Vidal novel burgeons slowly in the shade of Mammon. . . . Washington, D.C. Further, I may not say.

This place does make one rather stupid; however, *that* makes traffic with the natives all the more pleasurable. I live a life here of marvellous glitter which I will tell you about at length only in exchange for all the latest gossip, literary or real-worldly.

Affectionately,
GORE

New York City, July 25, 1957

DEAR GORE:

It will be in the papers (*Times & Trib*, of course) on Thursday, August 1st, and the wedding at Charlotte, Vermont, on Sept. 7th! A small affair, but not, of course, too small to include you, dear coz. If you can make it let me know a couple of weeks in advance, and I'll arrange a putting up. But as Charlotte is moderately inaccessible, you will be forgiven if "business" keeps you away. Seriously I am quite absurdly happy and pleased with myself. Adèle, who though the ablest of industrial designers and *practically* an M.A. in the history of art, is not shall-we-say exactly a specialist in the modern novel. Determined to bone up on this field she read a few pages of dear Norman's "The N & the D" ["The Naked and the Dead"], but put it away in a sad fit of boredom. You will like her. . . .

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Culver City, California, 1957

MY DEAR LOUIS:

What a sly, crafty move, calculated to destroy my tiny advantage now running at the Booth [Vidal's play "Visit to a Small Planet"]. . . . In what possible way can I close the gap?—Marriage! a trump card! I shall marry the ex-Mrs. Mailer—Oh, coz, I know how your mind works: you mean to bring me down in ruins with a single vow, and have! I shall marry Claire Bloom 9-6-57. *That* will even things. I am driven to the wall! But to strike the Virgilian note of seriousness, it is a beautiful move, filling the days, creating a richer design and with the old Flaubert I say, prematurely, that *they* are *dans le vrais*, and I envy you *them*.

I shall of course find my way to Vermont—steamer? stagecoach? my father's disastrous airline? I shall arrive, leering, like Geo. Selwyn at a lush quartering. I will probably come straight from Calif. to Vt. so we may not meet again during your bachelorhood. *Eheu*, as Gilbert Murray would say.

Affectionately,
GORE

To Louis Auchincloss

Rome, 1962

DEAR COZ:

. . . I want you to write a novel of New York at this very moment. Leave time

alone; put the law in it but in a proper corner, not center stage; keep the worthies of Old New York to the edge of the stage where in life they cling; place at the center all the monsters and sirens one knows . . . the Royals (properly disguised) are very much the essence of the way we live now . . . theatre . . . spivs: Elsie Woodward and C. Z. Guest and Paleys and Cushings, all the crew. I got the feeling you were the one to do it after your quick but accurate shots at the art galleries and publishing. This is the sort of book that people will like to read in a hundred years, just as we enjoy Balzac: there they are, living away so intensely, doing things with such passion, poor dears, not knowing they are quaint, and dead. Write this for me. Don't say "you write it" because I don't seem at the moment able to cope with my own raw material, torn, as it were, from the life of the time, I haven't digested it. But you *see* it.

After not having any novel for so long, I now have two novels ["Julian" and "Washington, D.C."] which is not healthy. I find it hard immersing in one without thinking longingly of the other. . . . I would finish ["Julian"] immediately if the Washington novel hadn't at last started to emerge after years of thought and trepidation. I have taken the plunge and written, very slowly, two chapters. Va. Woolf once said she thought first of "The Waves" as the fin of a fish in a dark sea, turning. I thought of this book as a great hot summer storm at Merrywood [the Hugh Auchincloss estate in Virginia, where Vidal lived as a boy] and someone standing there in the rain, frightened and delighted. After years of holding this image as the book's image, to my surprise it is how the story begins. Five characters 1937-1950, the death of the Old Republic, the beginning of the Caesars, the corruption of money evenly buttered on everything as opposed to the old corruption which was clottier, more vivid in contrasts. I have an idea that the only way now to write a novel is to ignore everything since Joyce (by that I mean the "experiments") and go back as simply as possible to the telling of a story. I am using all third person. Each chapter is one of the five, interacting. It will be hellishly long, and difficult. I have forgotten all about *what* novels are about. I have no plot and this makes me nervous. I need, usually, the impetus of something-to-be-done-or-else in my narra-

tive. The result is I am improvising out of character, much as you do in ["Portrait in Brownstone"]. But at some point I am going to have to get a few set actions. Luckily, I know exactly what I want to do with each of the five, how each shifts, changes, comes about. I am having some difficulty with real events but, taking a hint from Tolstoy, I am *using* real events, topical allusions (Roosevelt broods over the work like Napoleon over "War and Peace," though I shan't—I don't think—bring him on the stage). . . . Do you realize, dear coz, this is the longest letter I have written in many years and not simply out of love and admiration for an Old Acquaintance but because it keeps me from writing a very difficult passage in the novel to which now, as the paper ends, I turn.

Yours,
GORE

New York City, 1962

DEAR GORE:

I received "Julian" [a preliminary segment published in a collection of short works] at long last and read it at one swallow. I cannot forgive you for tantalizing me with only a morsel (and in Victor's [Victor Weybright's] cheap small print and ugly format—*what* a baptism for the best of Vidal!), and it is now your bounden duty to drop everything (even the Washington novel, good though it sounds) and *get on with* "Julian." It is just as good as your own outrageously conceited estimate of it. The two scholars are the perfect chorus, and have the incidental advantage of making the whole seem less like a Robert Graves. Their discussion of the Julian memoir is absolutely convincing, and the entry of Julian himself is smooth as butter. I really rave. Also, the need for historical accuracy provides a disciplinary frame which brings out the best of Vidal and keeps him from giving

way to a tendency to be didactic about what is wrong with the contemporary scene (a tendency barely discernible, except to those who read you deeply, in "The Best Man," but much grown in "Romulus"). It is the finest, cleverest, best Vidal, and I suspect that the "Washington" novel will bulge with your personal opinions and irritations. Please, please, let your "blessed old genius" have its way with Julian before you turn to F.D.R. The longer the latter simmers, the better it will be. In the meantime I pant for my first meeting with that suspicious horror, Constantius—see in what a state you have left your old friend and coz.

Admiringly and sincerely,
LOUIS

New York City, March 12, 1963

DEAR GORE:

Your *Esquire* article ["The Best Man 1968"] has stirred up a lot of comment. I must say that I love it and that "Can it, Ethel" has become to me the symbol of the Administration. I am tired of the Kennedys, or rather of Kennedyphilia, and I was happy to have you put the whole bus-

iness on a frankly sinister basis. Couldn't you do a rather nice little bit contrasting the Bonapartes with them? One man of mark surrounded by a vacant, fatuous chatter. I see Eunice [Shriver] as Caroline, Lee R. [Radziwill] as Hortense. . . .

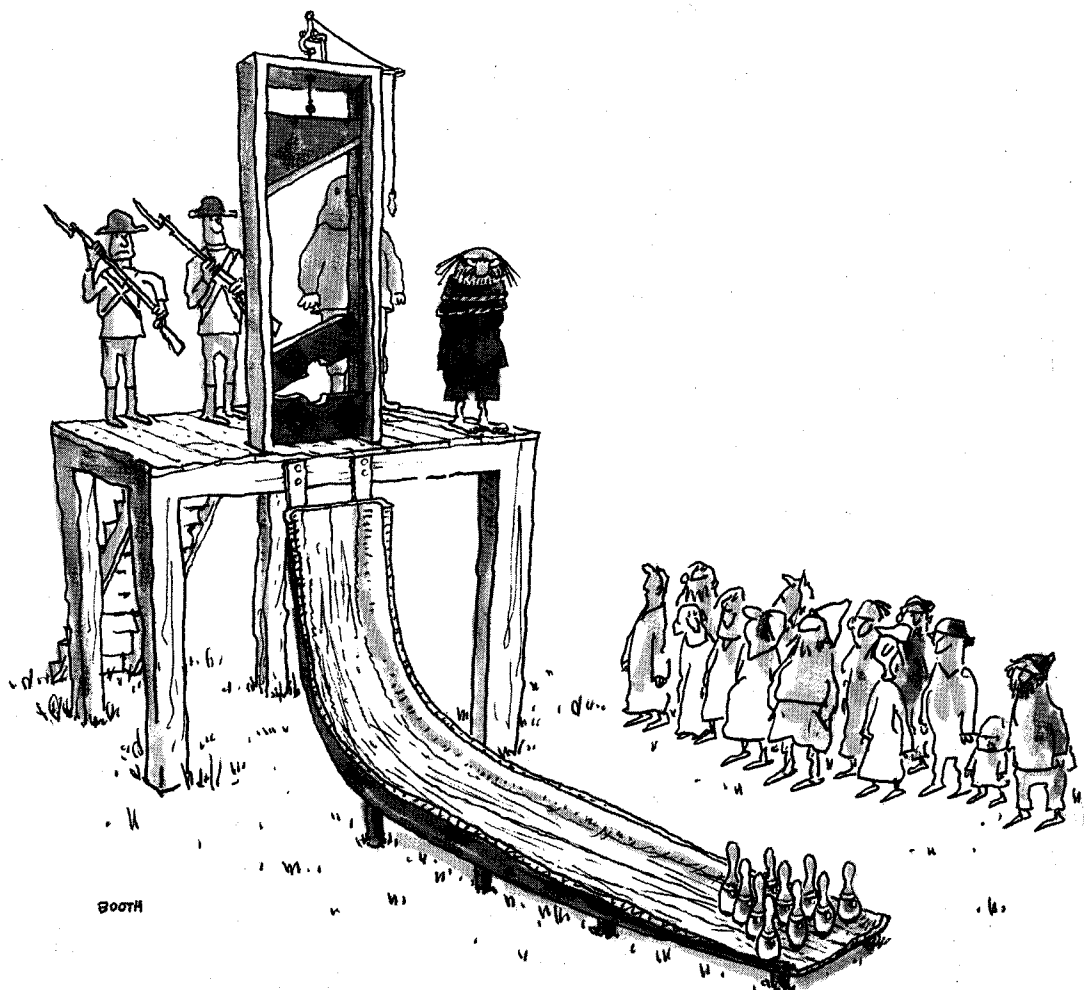
Stuart P. [Preston] says a group of letters about the Master [Henry James] have been discovered in England linking him with all kinds of louche young men in circumstances unmistakable. Leon [Edel] and I will not credit it until we have proof positive—our flag still proudly waves. . . .

Sincerely,
LOUIS

To Louis Auchincloss

Rome, March, 1963

. . . I like your Kennedy-Bonaparte conceit. . . . An even sharper Bonaparte-Kennedy analogy is Nap. III-Jack and Eugénie-Jackie: the leader of fashion and the bemused, shrewd, but curiously inoperative politician. I have had direct word that Bobby [Kennedy] is "furious"; the Imperials "outraged." I thought I was rather restrained and certainly honorable in using nothing of an inside nature (I



need *some* protective reserves). Did you read the piece on Bobby in *Newsweek*? It is savage and infinitely more documented than my casual commentary.

Of course the Master would have louche friends: ah, my dear young sir, by all means, yes, it can . . . perhaps not be entirely done but . . . ah, so beautifully put and so unmistakably . . . named? What curious appellation? *Trade*? A . . . do I dare say it? . . . price for this most intimate and yet appealing service? . . .

If you do get to Paris in the summer give me some warning and we may both be in the same country. Breakdown. Life here is quiet, good books, regular hours, Howard [Austen] (well), the dogs (one has nephritis), much work, sightseeing, a splendid week's trip to Naples-Herculaneum-Paestum-Taranto-Lecce (shades of S. Sitwell)-Brindisi-Bari-Troia-Caserta-Rome. Angus Wilson has been here; he has gained weight & looks rather like Margaret Rutherford. He is the most operative man of letters since Hugh Walpole, but flawed by intelligence. I do like to see & hear him; less to read his novels, but the stories were marvellous. I have given no more than a dozen interviews to the press & no TV (no one has asked me). Write.

Yours,
GORE

New York City, November 8, 1963

DEAR GORE,

I enjoyed your review in *Book Week* of Edmund Wilson's book ["The Cold

War and the Income Tax: A Protest"]. I had read it myself and thought it would have been a good deal more effective if the reader did not have to have constantly in mind the fact that the author must be a bit of an ass not to have paid his income taxes. . . .

As your lawyer you will want me to point out that you have placed a myth in parentheses. In 1895 the Supreme Court did not rule that President Lincoln's wartime income tax was unconstitutional but that the income tax passed in 1894 was unconstitutional. Lincoln's wartime tax had been upheld in *Springer v. The United States*, 102 U.S. 586, a decision that was overruled by implication by *Pollock v. Farmers' Loan & Trust*, 157 U.S. 429 (1895), the decision to which you made reference.

You may be amused to hear that Norman Mailer stated on David Susskind's "Open End" last Sunday that I was still young and "might yet write a good book."

I shan't write anymore as you owe me a letter.

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Rome, November, 1963

MY DEAR LOUIS:

Yes, I did know that the [Supreme Court] decision referred to '94 & not the Civil War tax (I looked it up in the encyclopedia, a good piece by the way, on income tax) but I was interested in condensing to show Abe started it, the

Court ended it, temporarily. Yes, Wilson is an idiot; worse, disingenuous. But I agree with him that the penalties are *excessive*, not that there should be no penalties. I have just finished an "original"—unique—screenplay which I shall have trouble getting done as it ought to be done. . . . Meanwhile, virtuously, I refuse to adapt "The Deputy" as well as "Roman Holiday" as a musical. The commercialities think me mad. Then back to the novel. I, too, am young & might still write. . . .

Yrs.
GORE

New York City, November, 1963

DEAR GORE:

I have thought of you many times this terrible weekend. Isn't it curious how much one cares? By one I don't mean you, who knew the President, but those of us who didn't. Is it caring, really, or are we TV-made creatures who have lost a "big brother"? Anyway, I feel I shall miss *all* the Kennedys, even Bobby. For Bobby will fizzle out, too, don't you think? What do you say, Warwick, who almost made him king?

Yes, dear coz, I received *both* your letters and was scandalized that your misstatement about the income tax had been *deliberate*. . . .

This is not a real letter. Just the desire to reach across the Atlantic on this our Ides of March (Ides in which we are all Marc Antonys) and to let you know I had received both yours.

How I regret our missed lunch—it is too long since we have talked.

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Rome, January 10, 1964

MY DEAR LOUIS:

Today I have finished the last galley of "Julian" & sent it off to the publisher. I feel like Gibbon—in Geneva, wasn't it? When he let the empire fall at last. I can't wait to know what you think of the book. I'm not optimistic about its chances in the bazaars of the republic but, all in all, I think the work is nearly what one wanted—well, *finished* anyway.

I flew back for the funeral [of John F. Kennedy] but there was much "confusion" over tickets ("the French Foreign Minister *must* be in the church") so one



"So, are you still with the same parents?"

did not attend. I suspect Bobby's hand, even at the edge of the grave. But one had made the gesture of solidarity. Jackie's mood, apparently, was one of rage more than grief: how dare they do this to us! But then Merrywood was always a bit like Colchis. Yes, Jack is a sad loss. He was adorable and one enjoyed his wit & pleasure in himself & the comedy which turned so unexpectedly black. If ever one doubted the wisdom of Greek tragedy, doubt no longer: nothing vast ever entered human life without a curse, as Sophocles more or less wrote. . . .

GORE

New York City, January 17, 1964

DEAR GORE:

Vastly entertained and touched by your words on the great tragedy. Will Onassis back out on her now? *There's* one for your Colchis idyll. I fear that Jackie's contribution of a million condolence letters to her husband's library gets it off to a soggy start. But it may be hard, when all the world regards you as the Queen of tragedy, to keep a sense of proportion. . . .

Sincerely,
LOUIS

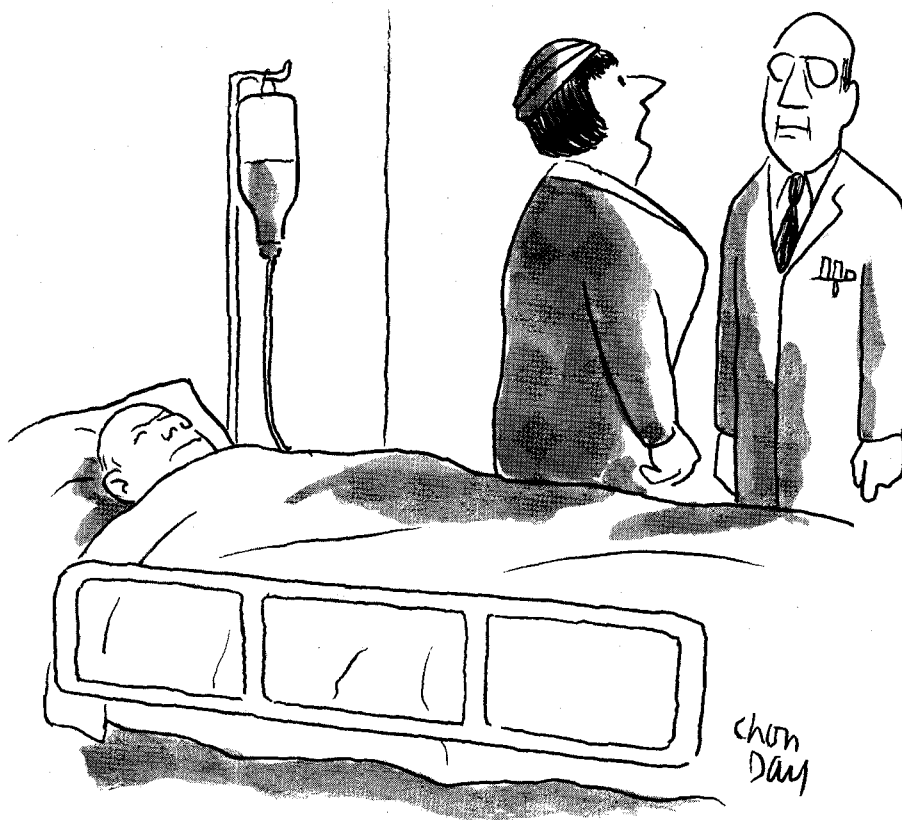
New York City, May 3, 1965

DEAR GORE:

I write with an eye on the clock for it will soon be 3 P.M. at which time the Pulitzer awards are announced. A certain number of friends have been betting that *this* time [with "The Rector of Justin"] I would pull ahead of the wretched "Herzog," but I fear they are optimistic. Do I care? Of course, I care. I have reached the age when I want prizes, *any* prizes. I want silver cups with gold lining such as I *never* won at potato races in children's parties; I want gold stars; I want ribbons. Even the glory of the Literary Guild, the speechless heights of Book-of-the-Month have not sated my mad middle-aged lust. . . .

It is now two-fifty. You will think, of course, that I am writing this afterward, but you will be wrong. This is one of those letters that Rousseau's characters (and at times the divine Richardson's) write while the events are actually occurring. . . .

My book on the lady novelists is due on June 7th. I will see a copy is sent to you. It looks quite well, and I think it



"When will he be able to sit up and take criticism?"

not so dull as I first suspected. I think I am best on Mary McCarthy and Willa Cather.

3 P.M. but no word. Announcement should have just been made. Shall I put on a false voice and call Columbia?

. . . Well, I *did* call, and the trustees are still meeting. Do you think there breathes among them a man with the guts to cry out against the "Herzog"? Can they not at least say "No Award"? The absurd thing about prizes is that they are supposed to encourage the arts and they have precisely the opposite effect. The winners either know how little the prizes mean or else decidedly should *not* be encouraged. The losers are disproportionately *discouraged* by seeing what works are preferred to their own. What a silly racket and how silly of me to mind. But I do.

LOUIS

To Louis Auchincloss

Rome, 1965

DEAR COZ:

Well, it is all over. The year of "The Rector of Justin" has given way to the glorious era of "Herzog" & we are now dim figures of a gentile American past,

to be confused no doubt by future historians with Red Indian bards. Well, we had our day, and though we lacked Moral Seriousness, in our Waspish way, we had style, and that condemned us. . . .

Various literary visitors: Truman Capote, wishing for an alliance: "I've always *loved* you, Gore. I don't know *why* you hate me." I told him. We parted friends, however.

Yours,
GORE

Rome, 1965

MY DEAR LOUIS:

I am midway through "Washington, D.C." and cannot tell yet what I am doing or how well I am doing it. The subject is slippery. And I have so many themes, having to do with those changes in time which affect us all humanly while affecting, quite as dramatically (but hardest to dramatize), the Republic which became reluctant empire, or was it so reluctant? Also I am having difficulty with the whole moral aspect of our lives, privately and publicly. What is a right action? What means may be used safely to achieve what ends, no matter how temporary? I am in Timothy Colt

land, [Colt was a disillusioned lawyer in Auchincloss's "The Great World and Timothy Colt," 1956] and in danger of stumbling into that moral nullity which you found, too, the moment you began to look very hard at our peculiar society. George Eliot had a very easy time of it indeed compared to us. It is also why I find the Leavises so absurd. They strike full chords of moral outrage. But then when one looks to them for any kind of agreed-upon moral behavior, they are as banal as the worst popular novelists, only their sense of outrage sets them apart and that, I submit, is not sufficient for the true artist. There must be the alternative *possible* vision. It is in the "possible" that one sees the great Nothing that threatens us all. Well, enough *pensée*. I shall load the book with little essays, in my best didactic manner.

Along with prose-writing, I have—like the old whore who cannot resist every now and then a return to her old beat just to see if the customers still respond—written three films since January. . . . These things are fun to do. They don't take much time. It is always good to have a craft as well as an art. I can see future explicators: had he but known that his rude little art was the film and his foolish craft the novel he might indeed have. . . .

Rome in August has been perfect. Cool weather. Superfluous people gone. A trip to Spoleto where I spent an evening able to look at Ezra Pound who did not speak but posed for hours on end, very much the great poet. What asses they are, these poets. How fortunate that one does not have to read them. All sorts of people come through town. It is really like New York in the summer. Next week Princess Margaret arrives to stay with Judy [Montagu] and we are all alerted to amuse her. But will she amuse us? That is royalty's last function. . . .

Yours,
GORE

New York City, April 7, 1967

DEAR GORE:

"Washington, D.C." certainly has some of your highest spots in humor, liveliness, and excitement. . . .

And yet.

Forgive me, coz, but let me pray that this book has exorcised the Kennedys

from your soul. They have wrought a terrible revenge on you. For Clay in the second half is ruined by the contrast of J.F.K. Clay is charmless, and what would J.F.K. have been without charm? The question can't be answered because he wouldn't have existed without charm, at least as a successful politician. You have created a monster in whom, thank God, we do not have to believe.

Or is it Bobby?

Is that the message?

And are you right, after all?

Horrors.

At any rate, thank you for the old senator, for the movie critic turned columnist, for all the terrible parties, and for the wonderful wisdom that governs each character's *second* thoughts.

I prefer "Julian," but maybe that is because I prefer Rome—when men *knew* that power was all.

Spain was glorious but brief.

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Rome, 1967

MY DEAR LOUIS:

Just read your letter, waiting upon my return—had I known your demurs we would have talked about them at lunch, exhausted as I was by the homely pleasure of a barium enema. Clay is *not* J.F.K., not remotely. Nor is he—in his creator's eyes—a monster. The similarity to Jack is, simply, the way money is used to promote illusions & win elections. We disagree on Jack's PT-109 feat. I call it admirable but would expect no less of any officer. You find it heroic—*ecco*—Clay's "heroism" was entirely manufactured, & a fact—I suspect—of some amusement to him. He is a *lucky* Julien Sorel & his attitude to himself is realistic & detached. Peter detests him. I don't—in fact, I would probably vote for him in a field of [George] Romneys & Bobbys. The only deliberate likeness to Jack is the sexual promiscuity & I think I have got the point to each—sex as a means to power not over the woman so much as over the other men involved with her. . . .

My own impression of the book is that it is unexpectedly sad, & I can't think why. My contempt for the empire has always been, I thought, complete but cheerful. Instead I am as gloomy as Tacitus without ever being able for one moment to believe, as he did, that the

Republic was much better. I did find it significant that none of the book men in their chat pieces seemed aware of the book's theme. Just as well, probably, since they are not competent to write of such matters. Someday look at the text again without thinking, Gore means to let Jack have it, & you may like Clay better. As for Jack, my memory of him is most pleasant & though I feel one ought to prevent the heirs from making a god of him I don't in the least mind him being a man.

Yours,
GORE

New York City, May 22, 1967

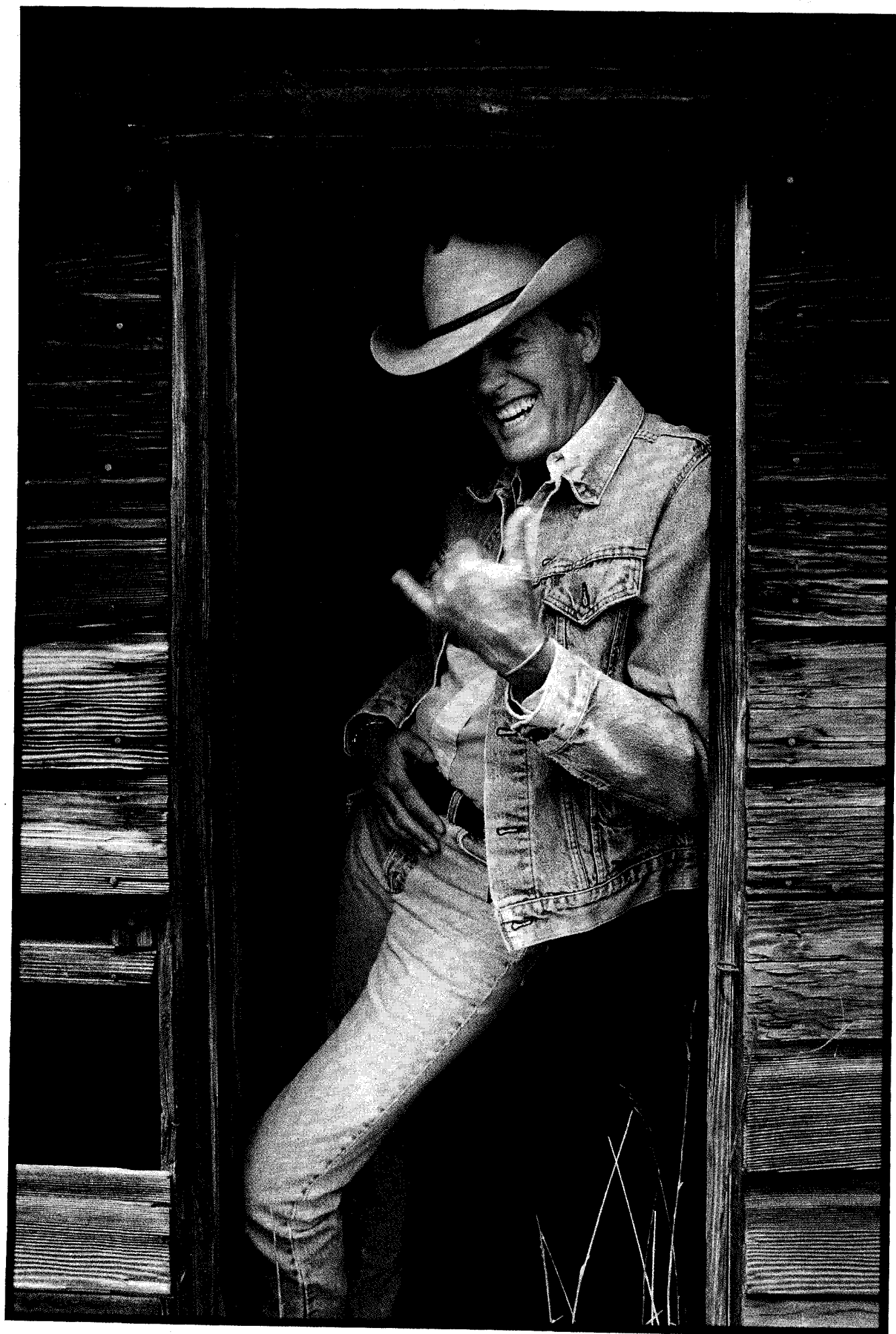
DEAR GORE:

Of course I do not think that Clay is J.F.K. in the vulgar sense of the roman à clef. What I mean is that you have been absorbed in the Kennedy saga since 1960 (in them you have seen a realization of many of the ideas of power that have always fascinated you) to a degree where they cannot be divorced from your fiction when you write about *their* Washington. Suppose you had lived in Paris from 1805 to 1815 and studied the career of the Emperor. Could you pos-

FONDA'S ODYSSEY

If you haven't had the actor Peter Fonda in your sights since his motorcycle-movie heyday, in the sixties, you may be surprised to find him playing a North Florida beekeeper with a couple of grandchildren, in the writer-director Victor Nunez's new drama, "Ulee's Gold." He's still square-jawed and laconic, and, with his hair silvering and his hairline receding (though you might not know that from the picture at the right), he looks more like his father than ever. Ulee Jackson—one of the best roles of Fonda's career—is a man who has retreated deep inside himself in the six years since the death of his wife, Penelope. (Ulee is short for Ulysses.) His son is in jail. His daughter-in-law has disappeared, and in the course of the story he has to rescue her from a couple of her husband's criminal associates, and come out into the open air again himself.

Peter Fonda in Montana, photographed by William Claxton.



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"Is that decaf?"

sibly write a novel about a world conqueror without coming to grips within yourself with your protagonist's relationship to Bonaparte? I am not interested in minor resemblances or minor differences. The *essence* of your Clay's rise to power is, as I see it, the essence of the Kennedys' as you see them. I do not see how a reader can be expected not to relate the terrible things you are saying (for your characters care about *nothing* but perverse power for its own sake—in a void—to be obtained by any means) with the political world around him and the dynasty that absorbs so much of our press. Why else did you write the book? You say *this* is how they really are. My question is how does Gore Vidal know? And the answer is that he knows because he has studied the Kennedys. Let's face it, if you were dealing with little people, you'd have written "Madame Bovary," not "Washington, D.C." . . .

What I miss in "Washington" is the interest that I believe all the characters would have had in other things. For ex-

ample, I believe that Bobby Kennedy was sincere when he almost became a priest. No character in your novel would have dreamed of it. They are creatures of the Jacobean stage, more vivid, powerful, and not quite human.

Of course, it is rising to the top of the best-seller list, and it should. Whatever reservations I may have does not mean that I prefer [Elia] Kazan or [Allen] Drury. And I think you are too bitter about critics. Your reviews have not been bad at all. But, of course, like a Roman emperor, even in a triumph, you have a long eye on the most distant barbarians in Parthia.

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Rome, 1968

MY DEAR LOUIS:

I've read with all usual pleasure—and speed: one sitting—the new book ["A World of Profit"] which I found fascinating, well worked out & touching. I don't have it at hand & so have forgot names & points I wanted to

bring up. But one I recall: did you mean for the grumpy sister to be such a perfect bitch? I took her as that but wondered if I was meant to. I had the same response to the Princess in "The Golden Bowl." Also, the terrible problem for all of us but particularly for you: how is one meant to behave in a society without an agreed-upon set of values? It is not really possible to moralize about your hero's wheeling & dealing. I think Henry Adams discovered this at the end of "Democracy." The lady's last speech is sad, revealing, incontrovertible. I suspect we all need a new attack upon the subject. Not for us the certain gravity of Marian Lewes [George Eliot]. In a sense the grotesque "Myra" [in Vidal's "Myra Breckinridge"] was an attempt to break out of the maze of paradoxes which we do not even dare call an ethical system. Myra went

to the root, as it were (the Master himself could not have stumbled so happily!), and came up with a kind of truth about the will to power beyond right & "wrong." . . .

Yrs.,
GORE

New York City, November 20, 1974

DEAR GORE:

I am sorry I missed you on your last trip, but I certainly read about you enough. I am much amused to follow your public career as a High Priest on the pageant of America's self-hatred and self-flagellation. You are like Kaa, the rock python in "The Jungle Book" who does his shining, tumbling dance before the hypnotized Bandar-log who stumble forward, helpless, until they are within the reach of his jaws. I thought you had almost approached the limit of the present American mood of masochism when you spoke in *Newsweek* of the caponization of the young Yankee male, but I am inclined to think that you can go yet further. I wonder if

such a mood has ever existed in any other nation? You will surely have your own chapter in social history as well as in literary. . . .

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Rome, 1974

DEAR LOUIS:

I was only in town a few days; after that three months of lecturing, whistle-stopping with splendid *large* crowds of masochists, lusting for my whip! As for such a mood in other times, look to Athens post-Syracuse, to Aristophanes, no mean lash himself and a proto-Myra-creator if ever there was one. Were our pretensions as a people & good luck (until recently) as an empire less than there would be no need for such fierce commentaries & diatribes. But we are deeply conceited, particularly the new arrivals unto the third generation, and so the necessary pinpricks tend to become exercises in butchery. But to a good end, I like to think. The people-out-there, by the way, are a good deal more thoughtful than their rulers; they also know that they are being most beautifully & perfectly fucked (hiya, fella!). What next?

Yours,
GORE

New York City
November 9, 1990

DEAR GORE:

Nineteen-ninety has not been my year. My brother John died, my sister's husband is in the last stages of galloping Alzheimer's, my younger brother's wife has leukemia, and now, worst by far, my poor Adèle (fourteen years younger than myself!) has developed a case of multiple myeloma, a malignant bone-marrow disease, which won't go away but can be held in indefinite check by medicines taken every six weeks. The whole summer was spent in and out of hospitals, but now we are slowly resuming the forms of normal existence. Her spirit sustains me and the boys, and indeed she may conquer it.

I went last night to the "Lions" dinner at the N.Y. Public Library with Brooke [Astor] and [David] Dinkins and Barbara Bush and *tutti quanti*, or whatever your wop phrase

is, to see the "great world" for the first time in months and decided that a cell in the desert (or Tangiers, as you might have me prefer) is not so bad. I talked to Norman [Mailer] who opined that it was odd that we should get on so well since we had nothing in common. "Nothing in common!" I retorted. "We live in the same silly island, publish our wet dreams, and go to the same silly parties—and have for years! It would take a mother's eye to tell the difference between us. Of course, it is true that I don't marry quite so much." . . .

Sincerely,
LOUIS

Ravello, December, 1990

DEAR LOUIS,

I should say Job though it is bad luck to mention bad luck because that merely encourages worse luck. For what it is worth, Bette Davis had what Adèle has got, thirty years before her endlessly deferred death. She described the whole grisly thing to me, which involved removing a section of jaw "because I am an actress and there must be no disfig-

urement of the face," and there was none, and she died of ten other things.

Poor Norman. He is still the young John Garfield, with a fiddle and a dream, and you are Joan Crawford—generically, that is—and we all mean to take him into our corrupt, effete world so far from the sincerities and dill of the Carnegie Delicatessen. He goes to everything; I go to nothing; but in any poll of book-chat people, I would be named as the heartless social butterfly and he as the butterfly paperweight. *Tiens*.

I can't think why I so thoroughly gave up on the social life but I did. . . . I now do all the things elderly writers are supposed to do. Putting in paths in the rose garden—all right the paths *are* marble but the principle holds; while slowly reading and writing and gazing into the fire of olive wood, awash (I, *not* the wood) with self-pity assuaged somewhat by self-love required. . . . Why not break down, the two of you, and come here? This is not the worst place to walk on marble beneath stone pines, in summer. . . .

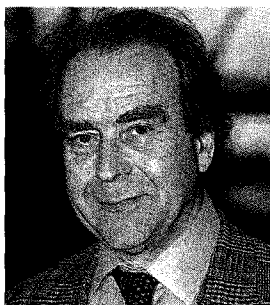
Yrs.,
G. ♦



"It's not like he's the only guy with demons out there."



ARTIST'S SKETCHBOOK
BY GERALD SCARFE



THE satirical cartoonist Gerald Scarfe is the latest in a long line of irreverent British caricaturists which stretches back to Max Beerbohm and William Hogarth. Though he's best known for his poison-pen lampoons of politicians and other celebrities, Scarfe has also had an impressive career as a stage designer, working on everything from Mozart (a loony "Magic Flute") to French operetta (Offenbach's "Orpheus in the Underworld" reinvented as a lurid pop-up comic book) and Feydeau farce ("An Absolute Turkey," which garnered him an Olivier in 1994).

Most recently, he teamed up with Disney to supervise the designs for the studio's summer cartoon feature, "Hercules." Scarfe is no stranger to animation: fifteen years ago, he created the cartoon interludes in "Pink Floyd—The Wall," a dark hallucination perfectly suited to his eccentric style. Disney toned down his unruliness a bit for the kids: the Fates that the little ones will have seen fourteen times by summer's end won't be quite as loathsome as the hags in Scarfe's original design (above), nor will the god of war (right) quite so closely resemble a befuddled bureaucrat. —JAMIE JAMES

NILS JORGENSEN/REX FEATURES



FICTION

MORMON EDEN

Preparing for the missionary profession.

BY WALTER KIRN



chartered buses idled outside the church, surrounded by thirty or forty kids in shorts. Adults with clipboards were giving out seating assignments. Elder Tinsdale, our leader, spoke my name and I stepped forward, carrying a suitcase.

"Stow your stuff and climb on," he said. "Bus Two."

"I'd like to ride in back, if possible."

"The seating arrangements are fixed, Justin. They're the result of careful prayer. I'm sorry."

I climbed the steps of the air-conditioned bus and moved down the aisle, looking for my nametag. Boys were on one side, girls on the other. The chaperons sat up front, behind the driver. He was the only non-Mormon on the bus—a black man in a white shirt with silver epaulets. In his hand was a plastic no-spill coffee cup and in his shirt pocket I saw a pack of Camels. I wondered how far from the bus he'd have to go when he wanted to smoke one.

My seat was an aisle seat halfway down the bus. I was grateful to whoever had chosen it: an aisle seat made it easy to reach the bathroom. Lately, I'd been peeing more than usual—at least twice an hour. I blamed my medication. That spring, when word had reached the school psychiatrist that I'd been disrupting teachers' lectures and flubbing easy quizzes, he'd given me a prescription to help me focus.

I stood up to let in my seatmate, Orrin Cord. He seemed preoccupied and didn't speak to me, just turned his face to the tinted window and laced his fingers together on his lap. Orrin was our youth group's leading skeptic, perpetually in crisis about his faith. His four older brothers had all been missionaries, in countries from Japan to Guatemala, and the stories they'd brought back of for-

eign cultures had bred in Orrin a bitter sophistication. It was an open secret that he drank tea, and he sometimes wore a beret to sacrament meeting. He'd warned me that he knew more about Church history than anyone else on the tour, including the chaperons, and he swore he'd speak out if he caught them teaching lies.

The trip hadn't started but already I had to go. The bathroom was narrow, like an upright coffin. A deodorant pine tree dangled above the sink. I aimed, released, shook off, and zipped back up, aware that I had a long three days ahead of me. Part of me wished I could quit the Ritalin, but I feared the withdrawal symptoms I'd heard about: headache, irritability, mood swings, lethargy. The only time I'd missed my daily dose, I'd slept for twelve hours and awakened in a rage, shaking so hard I could barely brush my teeth.

The girl who had taken the seat across the aisle from mine smiled when I sat down. I smiled back. Opal Singer was Mormon aristocracy. According to Orrin, whose hobby was genealogy, she was a direct descendant of Brigham Young and his second-youngest wife. The blood of prophets ran in Opal's veins. For her, our tour of Mormon sacred sites would be a kind of homecoming, a pilgrimage, while for me it would be an introduction.

"Excited?" I asked her.

"I am. I couldn't sleep."

"What place do you want to see most?"

"I can't decide. What about you?"

"Missouri. The Garden of Eden."

"You're sure it's in Missouri, not in Kansas?"

We both looked at Orrin for help.

"Missouri," he said. "The Garden of Eden is definitely in Missouri."

WHEN my family converted to Mormonism, spurred by my father's desire to put his life together after his second arrest for drunken driving and a brief separation from my mother, all I saw were restrictions and impositions:

no smoking or drinking, no "hard" rock, endless services, monthly fasts. I imagined that my life would turn dry and boring and that I'd drop out within a month or two. What I hadn't counted on, however, was the novelty of a religion whose sacred places—the farm in upstate New York where God and Jesus appeared to Joseph Smith, the trail of exile across Nebraska's plains, the Promised Land of the Utah desert—were in America, close by, where a person could actually see them for himself.

Ever since spring, when the trip had been announced, I'd been looking forward to this weekend. Our goal was to tour the Middle Western holy sites, beginning with Nauvoo, Illinois, an early settlement, and ending at Independence, Missouri, where Joseph Smith had prophesied that Jesus would come back to earth and summon all faithful Mormons to build a glorious temple.

The bus crossed from Minnesota into Iowa, and I for one had no sense of gathering history. At noon I swallowed another pill, washing it down with flat black-cherry soda. I imagined the pill dissolving in my esophagus, a tiny white bomb of sunburst energy. The belief among kids who weren't actually hyperactive was that the medication made you drowsy, but in fact it made you more alert. My thoughts took on such clarity and sharpness that concentration was easy. I only *looked* calm.

"What's wrong? Is something wrong? You feeling sick?" Apparently, Opal had seen me take the pills.

"Yes." It was always easier to say yes.

"Maybe you need a laying on of hands. You could ask Elder Tinsdale to bless you next time the bus stops."

I gave her a nod that said I would consider this. In truth, such hands-on healings didn't work for me. A year ago, after my family's baptism, I'd come down with a terrible earache and my father had approached the bishop for help. Two elders sat me in a folding chair, set-

tled their palms on my skull, and started muttering. After requesting Heavenly Father's aid, they went on to predict my future. They foresaw a life of shining promise: important work, wide influence, a loving wife who would bear me many children.

My earache subsided over the next few hours, but when I woke up the next morning my head was throbbing. Afraid that the relapse might harm my parents' new faith, I tried to ignore the pain. It didn't work. After lunch my mother gave in and phoned a specialist. My father seemed disappointed, let down. Part of what had attracted him to Mormonism, besides his desire to keep our family together and free himself from a lifetime of bad habits, was the prospect of miraculous good health.

In central Iowa the landscape flattened, and Opal drifted off to sleep. A silver stream of drool ran down her chin. Her left arm hung over the aisle, charm bracelet jingling. I'd never known a girl with so much jewelry. Her abundance of tinny lockets, fake-gold chains, clip-on earrings, and cut-glass rings gave her an ancient, almost Persian, appearance, as if some sultan had weighed her down with gifts.

Orrin elbowed me. "Got the Holy Ghost yet?" His joke referred to Elder Tinsdale's promise that we would feel a warm stirring in our stomachs as we approached the tour's first stop.

"Not yet." I stood up from my seat. I had to pee again.

"Where are you going?" asked Orrin. He knew full well. I'd made the mistake of confiding in him once about my condition.

"Shut up," I said.

Orrin looked at his watch. "One minute—I'm timing you. Anything over a minute, I'll break the door down."

I flushed with embarrassment as I walked away. The time limit was an anti-masturbation trick promoted in booklets distributed by our bishop. Other recommendations included sleeping with your hands outside the blankets and wearing a jockstrap inside your underwear. Apparently, the Church believed that convenience was a big part of masturbation and that the slightest delay in getting going would cause a young man to give up.

Unfortunately, Orrin's warning had got me thinking, and once I was in the bathroom with the door locked I wanted to linger there. The image of Opal's wet

chin was getting the best of me. To control myself, I tried another technique—one that Bishop Ericsson had taught me during our monthly moral-fitness talks. "When you feel like you're going to touch yourself," he'd said, "imagine your fantasy woman has a wound. A deep, bleeding cut. You'll snap right out of it."

My medication made the picture vivid. The oozing wound in Opal's side—a slash of luscious red beneath her rib cage—succeeded only in heightening my excitement.

"You went overtime," Orrin said when I returned. He'd put on his brown beret and mirrored sunglasses. A notepad lay on his lap, its top page headed "Distortion and Misinformation Checklist."

"If I was right next to Opal," Orrin said, "I'd go overtime, too. It's no coincidence."

"What isn't?"

"That they sat you two so close."

"They?"

"The powers that be. The Bishopric. They must be afraid you're going to leave the Church. Lots of converts do. So they sat her there as bait."

Orrin enlarged on this theory as we rode. The Church, he believed—and he cited several examples—perpetuated itself through sex and romance. The lure of marrying pretty Mormon women was, finally, what kept Mormon men in line. My own observations supported Orrin's notion. Mormon girls, unlike the girls at school, were precociously poised and seductive, strangely lush. They pitched their voices low and used mascara. They rarely wore sneakers, preferring shoes with heels, and were always smoothing lotions on their hands.

"The Church is against premarital sex—it *says*—but in fact it promotes it. It has to, to survive. It's been that way since the beginning, since pioneer days. And, believe me, the girls know their duty. They *do* their duty."

"Opal, too?"

"The moment she saw you next to her, she knew she had an assignment. She blushed beet-red."

"You're lying. You're making fun of me again."

"It's bred in a Mormon girl's bones. She has an instinct. She sees a straying sheep, she herds it back. But fine, don't believe me."

"I don't."

"Smart attitude. Don't take statements on faith—hold out for *proof*." Orrin gazed back out the window at the

highway. "You feeling the Spirit yet?"

"No."

"Me, neither," he said. "I'll let you in on a secret: there's no such thing."

BEFORE the Saints trekked west to Utah, driven out by hate and ignorance, they built this city, the largest in the state. They raised a militia. They built a splendid temple. The Prophet, Joseph Smith, campaigned for President. Nauvoo, Illinois, was a nation within a nation, thriving and vibrant, the envy of its neighbors."

Elder Tinsdale finished speaking and asked for questions. Orrin raised his hand.

"What about plural marriage? You left that out. That's the real reason the Mormons were driven west."

Elder Tinsdale turned to Sister Helms, the oldest and sternest of our chaperons. "Practicing polygamy," she said, "is not Church doctrine."

"It used to be," Orrin said.

"What's past is past. The Church moves on. It changes."

"I thought the idea of this trip was learning *history*."

The group formed a line and we followed the chaperons into the Church-run Visitors' Center. We passed a painting of a farmer at prayer and another of Jesus Christ in Central America, where Mormons believed he'd walked among the natives following his death and resurrection. In a diorama of Joseph Smith at home, life-size mannequins sat in antique chairs around a fireplace. Elder Tinsdale flipped a switch that lowered the lights and caused movies of human faces to shine on the mannequins' featureless heads. The plastic figures came to life, their "voices" filtering out from hidden speakers.

Polygamy wasn't spoken of again, and Orrin moved along with shuffling feet. "What a whitewash," he kept whispering. My eyes were fixed on Opal, in front of us. Her skin was the glossy brown of caramel apples, plumped by the thinnest layer of baby fat. Her lashes were so long that they looked false. She asked no questions and seemed annoyed when others did. I envied the simple faith she seemed to radiate, her willingness to be guided and instructed. It impressed me almost as much as Orrin's jaded wit.

Lunch was a buffet picnic on the lawn. The chaperons sat together under a tree, drinking grape Kool-Aid and gnaw-

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ACROSS

- 1 ARCH (2 defs.)
- 4 MIST ("missed" hom.)
- 7 ROU(LET)TE
- 8 E + DEN
- 10 STEIN (2 defs.)
- 11 PETTY (2 defs.)
- 12 RIFTS (anag.)
- 13 EL (C)ID ("deli" anag.)
- 15 BRANd
- 16 S(N)UGGEST
- 17 EGOS (anag.)
- 18 T(R)EE

DOWN

- 1 ARES (hidden)
- 2 ROD SERLING (anag.)
- 3 CUE + STICK
- 4 M(EAT)Y
- 5 STRIPTEASE (anag.)
- 6 TEN + NIS (rev.)
- 7 SE(AFAR)ER
- 11 P + LEASE
- 12 RINGS (2 defs.)
- 14 ANTE (rev.)

**MONT
BLANC**
THE ART OF WRITING

ing chicken drumsticks. They were all women except for Elder Tinsdale. Ever since his divorce, six months ago—a split that the Church considered honorable because Sister Tinsdale had joined the Scientologists—he'd been surrounded by helpful older women who cleaned his house and bought his groceries for him. Now they leaned forward slightly and watched him eat. Whenever he spoke they nodded, sighed, or laughed, and when his glass was empty they refilled it.

"I talked to Opal," Orrin said, snatching the uneaten drumstick off my plate.

"What happened?"

"She thinks you're a fox. She loves your hair. She thinks you could maybe wear it shorter, though."

"When do you think she'll make her move?"

"Don't know. I just wish *I* was a convert," Orrin said. "Layer by layer, you get to go inside. Uncover the mysteries. Find the buried treasure. Me, I was *born* inside. It's all so stale now."

After lunch we toured Nauvoo on foot. The Mississippi lent the town a fishy smell and drew my attention to the western horizon. In the house where Joseph Smith had lived, we stood behind velvet ropes and viewed a kitchen where mannequin women were canning beans and corn. I stood back to accommodate the shorter kids and found myself next to Opal. Our elbows knocked.

"I hear you're related to Brigham Young," I said.

"Who isn't?" Opal joked. It made me like her more. "A hundred years ago, out in St. George, Utah, there was a man with over a thousand grandkids."

"I'll bet he was tired."

"Tired of what? You *pervert!*"

Next we admired the Prophet's study. Opal turned her bracelet on her wrist. She examined the back of one hand, as if for flaws. "My skin's getting wrinkly," she said. "I'm only sixteen. A hundred years ago, I'd be married by now. I wouldn't have to worry about my looks."

"I like your looks."

"Thank you. That helps. I like yours, too."

Elder Tinsdale sidled in between us and Opal edged away. He rested his broad, hairy hand on my shoulder. His knack for "getting down on kids' level" was famed throughout the ward, though all it consisted of was lots of touching.

"Spectacular trip," he said. "What a way to learn."

"Where are we going tomorrow?"

"Carthage Jail. That's where the mob shot Joseph Smith, the bastards."

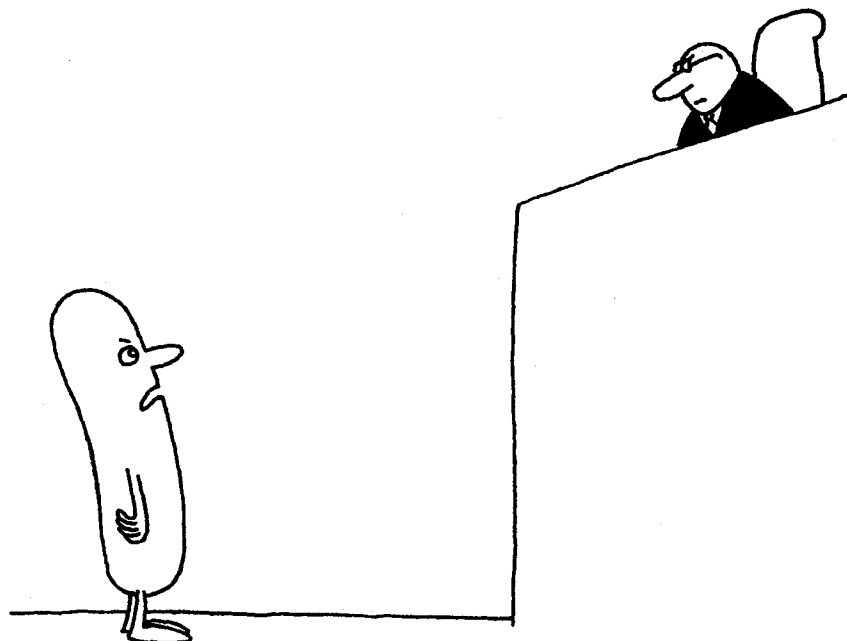
I looked at him.

"Excuse me."

"I swear, too."

"I take the Prophet's death personally. I shouldn't. It all worked out exactly according to plan."

A silence fell. Elder Tinsdale's stom-



C. Porretti

"I didn't ask to be made with seventeen grams of fat."

R. CRUMB

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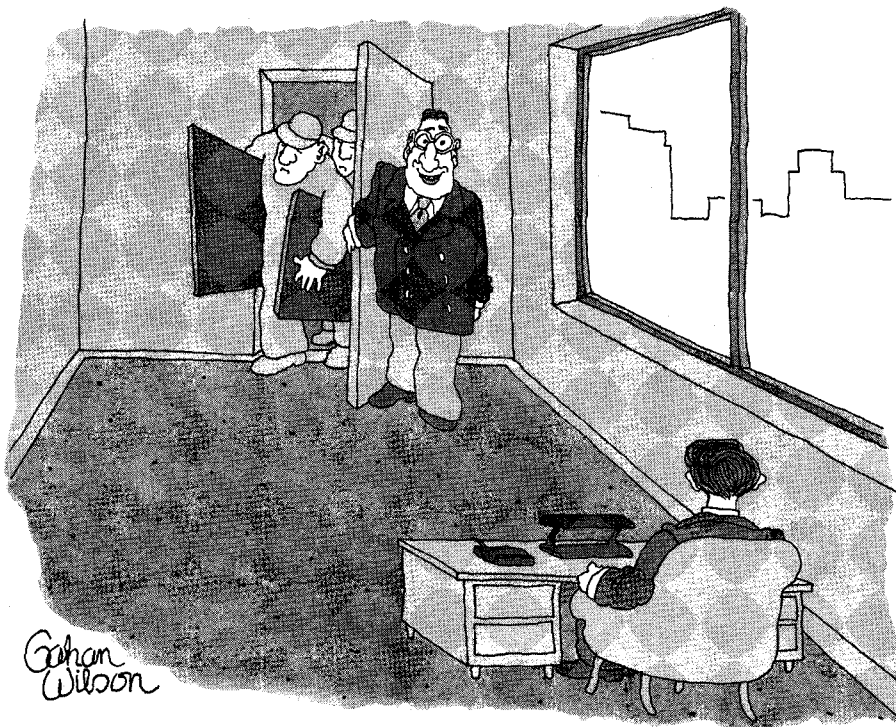
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Gahan Wilson

"We've decided to build a little cubicle around you and your desk, Harris."

ach rumbled. I was starting to wish I'd eaten lunch.

"Opal's a special young woman," said Elder Tinsdale. "Heavenly Father gave her singular gifts."

"I know," I said softly.

"How's your family doing?"

"Better. Much better. Happier." It was true. Church life had eased the tension level at home and there were fewer slammed doors and broken dishes.

"Sounds like you found us just in time. I'm glad. Listen, you enjoy this trip, O.K.?"

"Yes. I promise." I glanced at Opal's shoulders.

Elder Tinsdale squeezed my arm. "Spectacular."

WE slept that night on the cold linoleum floor of a church gymnasium. I woke after midnight with an urgent bladder and quietly peeled off my sleeping bag. I tiptoed between the rows of snoring Mormons, feeling pleasantly guarded and surrounded. Before the conversion I'd belonged to nothing, nothing but my family and my school, but now I was part of a movement, a community. I had comrades all over the country, all over the world.

Coming out of the bathroom, I heard

a sound. I turned to see Opal in shorts and T-shirt, barefoot. There was a crust in the corners of her lips and one of her cheeks was red and grooved from lying against the zipper of her sleeping bag.

"I can't fall asleep away from home," she said. "I miss my ferrets."

"Do ferrets make nice pets?"

"Until they grow up and get fat. They start to smell then. Let's go outside—I'm smothering in here."

From the church's back lawn we could see the Mississippi, its surface slick and luminous and vast. The stars were so near they appeared to have volume. A blinking satellite arced across the sky. Opal shivered and took my hand and squeezed it.

"It's up there, I know it," she said. "In all its glory."

I took her to mean the Celestial Kingdom, the highest realm in the three-tiered Mormon Heaven. The two lower realms, the Terrestrial and the Telestial, were nice enough places, but not truly exalted. Only in the Celestial Kingdom could a faithful Mormon husband summon his wife by calling the secret name divulged to him in the temple wedding ceremony. The couple, once reunited in the afterlife, could then go on to reproduce eternally, populating

new planets with their offspring and ruling over these worlds as God rules ours.

"I feel sorry for kids who don't have our beliefs. They look at the sky and all they see is . . . sky." Opal moved my hand onto her knee. "Is it selfish to want other people to have what I have?"

"No. I think it's the opposite of selfish."

"Scoot closer. I'm cold."

I put my arm around her.

"I'm a happy person," Opal announced. "I know that's uncool to admit these days, especially if you're young. Tough luck—I'm happy. I know where I'm going, I know where I'll end up. It shows in my eyes, people say. In my expression. It used to embarrass me, looking so contented, but now I don't care. I've decided to let my light shine."

At this, Opal rested her head on my right shoulder. My nose filled with the smell of Prell shampoo. She shifted around and blew air against my earlobe, a series of delicate, regulated puffs.

"That tickle?"

I nodded.

"Did you take drugs?" she said. "Before you converted, I mean."

"I took a lot of drugs."

"What were they like?"

"It depends."

"On what?"

"The drug."

Opal yawned and opened my hand. She traced an index finger along the branched lines in my palm. She licked my neck. Her strokes started short and gradually grew longer, until she was licking me from ear to collarbone. I felt my artery pulsing against her tongue tip. I felt my chest warm up inside my shirt. Opal slid a hand between the buttons and did something technical to one of my nipples.

"Unbuckle your belt," she said. "I want to touch you there."

I hesitated, and Opal said, "You need me. It's fine that you need me. Unbuckle."

I did as she said. Cool air blew through my zipper, followed by the warm grip of Opal's fist. My skin was numb and rubbery at first, but soon I began to respond. My shoulders relaxed. Opal worked her cheeks to juice her mouth up, then lowered her head. She pushed her hair aside. The last thing I saw before I shut my eyes was Opal's hand slipping under her own waistband.

Her efficiency charmed me. The act was tidy, polished. It left me feeling shiny, spiffed up.

Afterward, Opal said, "No more drugs—you promise? I tasted them in my mouth. They taste like chemicals."

I kissed her hair, her forehead. "That felt perfect. I want to do more with you. When can we do more?"

Suddenly Opal seemed shy. She hid her face from me. She plucked a handful of grass and let it fall. "Maybe never. I don't know. It's tricky."

"Why?" I said. "We can switch around next time."

"I'd like that. I'm sorry. I just don't know," she said.

"The drug thing?"

Opal shook her head and sighed.

"Why?"

"Because other people need me, too."

THE stairs at Carthage Jail were narrow, and Elder Tinsdale divided us into groups before we went inside. He lowered one hand like a railway-crossing arm between my chest and Opal's back, and she went on ahead. She didn't look back. She'd been friendly to me that morning but not quite warm, and I wondered if she was testing me somehow, or if I seemed different to her in the light. As requested, I'd thrown out my Ritalin at breakfast and now I was in a state of nervous self-monitoring, waiting to see if my symptoms would return: the toe-tapping, the yakking, the antsiness.

Opal's group, which included Orrin, filed out of the jail as mine filed in. Orrin was shaking his head. He looked disgusted. "Smith was a Mason," I heard him telling Opal. "When they shot him, he gave the Masonic cry for help. Why does the Church have to keep things such a secret?"

"I'm sure they have their reasons," Opal said.

Upstairs, in the jail cell, Elder Tinsdale dramatized the Prophet's martyrdom. "The mob burst in *here*," he said. "Joseph Smith was *here*. They chased him to this window over *here*." He invited us to gather at the window and gaze at an old stone well some distance below, where the assassins had propped the Prophet's body. "Allow me to give a personal testimony. Standing here, on this spot of blood and horror, I know the Gospel is true. I feel its power.

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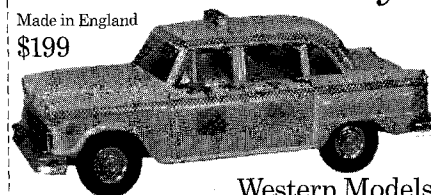
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I ask you to quiet your minds and share this knowledge."

Someone sneezed, and then the group fell silent.

"That warmth in the pit of your stomach—do you feel it?"

"Yes," a girl said.

"Do you feel it, Justin? *Justin?*"

I looked up, startled. "Not yet," I answered truthfully.

"Give it time. Be still and concentrate."

I feared that my foot might start tapping, but it didn't. Nor did I feel irritable. Amazingly, I managed to clear my mind, and for me this was a miracle in itself. Slowly I grew aware of a low tingling that might have been the Holy Ghost, withdrawal, or a feeling left over from my night with Opal. I chose for it to be the Holy Ghost.

"What's happening?" Elder Tinsdale said.

"I feel it."

"You don't sound very convinced."

"I am. I feel it."

My testimony, despite its hesitancy, made me an instant hero. I'd scored big. On the way downstairs the group congratulated me. Girls hugged me and boys slapped my back. "Good work," one said. I'd attracted a fan club, a cheering section. When someone thrust a stick of gum at me and I bit down on it, the taste transported me. It was the taste of feeling that I belonged.

The buses revved their engines and opened their doors. Elder Tinsdale called us to attention. "You'll notice we've changed the seating, so check for nametags. Kids who didn't have windows should have windows now. What's more, this should give you a chance to make new friends."

As I made my way down the aisle my spirits fell. I didn't see my name-tag anywhere. A kid named Tim Kriss had taken Orrin's old seat, and Orrin was in mine, across from Opal. She hadn't moved. When I passed her, she looked down and turned a page in her Book of Mormon. I felt a spike of anger. My forehead tensed. The headache that I'd been waiting for materialized.

Finally, I found my place—in the very last row, a three-seater by the bathroom. I sat down. Beside me was Sister Helms, the chaperon.

"We thought you might be more comfortable back here. We noticed you had to go a lot," she said.

SHANKED ON THE RED BED

The perch was on the roof, and the puck was in the air.
The diffident were driving, and the daunted didn't care.
When I came out to search for you the lauded hit the breeze
On detonated packages the bard had built to please.

The century was breaking and the blame was on default,
The smallest mammal redolent of what was in the vault,
The screeches shrill, the ink lines full of interbred regret—
When I walked out to look for you the toad had left his net.

The discourse flamed, the jurors sang, the lapdog strained its leash—
When I went forth to have you found the tenured took the beach
With dolloped hair and jangled nerves, without a jacking clue,
While all around the clacking sound of polished woodblocks blew.

When I went out to look for you the reductions had begun.
A demento took a shopgirl to a raisin dance for fun,
And f'r you, for me, for our quests ridiculous and chaste
The lead sky leered in every cloud its consummate distaste.

The mayors queued for mug shots while the banner rolled in the wind
That beat at bolted windows and bore down upon the thin,
And everywhere warped deliverers got bellicose and brave,
When I walked out to find you in the reconstructed rave.

The envelopes were in the slots and paperweights were flung.
When I came down to seek you out the torrents had begun
To rip the pan from handle and horizons from their shore,
To rip around your heady heart looking there for more.

—SUSAN WHEELER

"That was my medication. I'm off it now."

"Medication for what?" said Sister Helms.

The headache intensified, spreading down my neck. My breathing sped up, but it seemed to yield less oxygen. I was falling apart. I couldn't concentrate.

"You're grinding your teeth," Sister Helms said. "Settle down."

"I am settled down. I'm completely calm."

Sister Helms nodded and moved over a seat.

WE parked in the Garden of Eden's parking lot, next to the outdoor toilets and the garbage cans. We'd stopped at a Burger King that afternoon and everyone had trash to throw away. Kids stretched and yawned and took deep breaths, then walked in circles, working out their leg cramps. It was evening, and cool, with a breeze that

riffled my hair and sent me back to the bus for a jacket. I spied the bus driver's Camels on the dashboard and snatched the whole pack, as well as his matches. What I really needed was some aspirin, but Mormons viewed pills with suspicion, no matter what kind, and even if I found the courage to ask for some I doubted that anyone would admit to having any.

The youth group formed a circle in the parking lot to listen to Elder Tinsdale's lecture. Orrin and Opal seemed to be avoiding me. They stood at Elder Tinsdale's side, shoulders identically hunched against the chill, and gazed intently at his moving lips. Orrin's face had lost its pinched expression. He'd pushed his sunglasses up into his hair and there was a bright smudge of mustard on his chin. Opal licked a finger and wiped it off for him.

I felt a hot twitch of betrayal. My hands made fists. I couldn't believe how

quickly she'd moved on, how easily she'd shifted her devotion. To forget her, I trained my attention on Elder Tinsdale, but I found what he was saying hard to swallow. I had ideas about the Garden of Eden, particularly concerning its location. I pictured it in the Middle East somewhere, covered in sand, unmarked, a windswept ruin. I pictured dry riverbeds, mountainous horizons—not an ordinary Missouri valley covered in brush and grass and hardwoods. Still, Elder Tinsdale assured us that it was true: God had breathed life into Adam on this spot, and it was here that Jesus Christ himself would someday return and gather the elect—a hundred and forty-four thousand faithful saints who would follow him, carrying tools, to Independence, and break the ground for his everlasting temple.

Elder Tinsdale concluded his talk with yet another personal testimony. Next to me, Tim Kriss had started shaking. Sister Helms reached over and patted his hand. Even more palpably than in the jail cell, deep waves of feeling were surging through the group—though not, this time, through me. A boy cried, "Father!" A girl began to bawl. Our basketball team's star center hugged himself and slowly rocked from side to side. Even Orrin seemed moderately uplifted; he tilted his face back to catch the setting sun while Opal, serene as ever, stood by him, smiling.

Elder Tinsdale brought order to the group by instructing us to wander as we saw fit along the footpaths leading from the parking lot into the surrounding woods and fields. "Find somewhere peaceful to sit and pray and meditate. In forty-five minutes the drivers will honk their horns."

My plan was to go off alone to smoke a cigarette, but when I saw Opal and Orrin leave the group and sneak off together through a stand of sumac I decided to follow them. They held hands as they walked. Their steps were light and synchronized. I hung back, downwind, and lit a Camel, toying with the idea of tossing the match into the dry brush along the path. To burn down the Garden of Eden would be a feat, and I was surprised it hadn't been tried already.

Orrin and Opal were out of sight by now. I had an idea about what they

planned to do together, but I wasn't sure that I wanted or needed to see it.

I dropped the match on the ground and stamped it out, crediting myself with a good deed simply for having avoided an evil one. My thoughts had grown scattered, and when I closed my eyes and tried to pray I forgot what I was saying halfway through. "Heavenly Father, preserve my family. Heal my antsiness." I opened my eyes and started down the path again, following Orrin and Opal in spite of myself.

I heard them before I saw them. Someone was sobbing—great snuffing, rattling sobs. Opal's voice said, "O.K., calm down, I'm stopping." I stepped around a bush and looked below me. Orrin was sitting on his spread-out jacket with his Levi's pushed down around his knees. Opal was beside him, kneeling, her open shirt revealing a shiny pink bra. Orrin kept slapping his hands against his cheeks, the way men do when applying aftershave. He muttered the antisex incantation over and over.

"She's cut, she's hurt, she's bleeding . . ."

The scene made me angry and a little sick, but I couldn't stop looking. Opal grabbed Orrin's wrists, but he resisted. "Off me. Let me be. Get off," he said.

Opal relented and started buttoning her shirt.

"She's bleeding, she has a wound . . ."

"Shut up with that."

Orrin worked his pants up over his legs and fiddled with his belt. He'd held the line against something, he'd beaten temptation, but instead of respecting him for it I felt contempt. He was everything he pretended not

to be: programmed, afraid, intimidated, weak. His skepticism, which I'd admired, was fake, and that made me suspect his goodness was also fake. And though Opal's idea of saintliness disturbed me, at least she had the courage to see it through. Orrin's faith in God embarrassed him, while Opal's, which seemed more real to me, confused her.

I respected confusion. Confusion I understood.

I crouched in the weeds and waited for them to go. Opal stood up and stepped into her sandals while Orrin sat on his jacket and hung his head. I



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could see his white underpants through his open zipper. My headache, which had receded for a moment, returned with new strength. I noticed my knees were trembling.

Orrin raised his face. "Come back. Don't go. Maybe I did the wrong thing."

"Of course you didn't. You *never* do the wrong thing."

"I'll pray for you."

Opal gave Orrin the finger and walked away. I waited, then followed her. I rehearsed my innocent face. I took a side path that cut across the path Opal was on. I got ahead of her. I tried to look pleased and surprised when she approached me.

"Hi. I was meditating."

"Good for you," said Opal. She tried to step past me, but I kept up with her.

"Incredible place. Inspiring. I felt the Spirit again." My words ran together.

Opal walked faster. "Go away. Stop bugging me."

"I miss you. I want to talk. Let's talk. Wait up. Isn't this place incredible? What's wrong?"

Opal halted and spun around and faced me. The wings of her nostrils were pink and flared and moist. "I mean it, back off. I'm tired of you guys. I'm tired of being taken advantage of."

I couldn't stand still. I nodded. I

jiggled one foot. "Right," I said. "Right. O.K. I see. O.K."

"You're vibrating," Opal said. "You're scaring me."

"I'm fine."

"Get a blessing, O.K.? You need a blessing."

"I tried once. It didn't work."

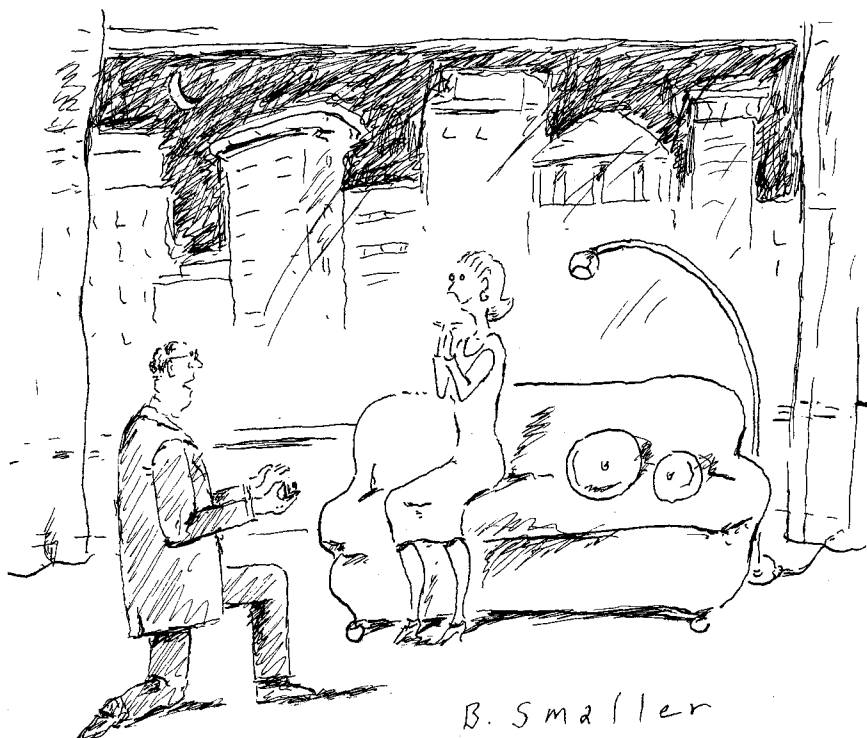
"So try again."

ON the trip's final day we drove to Independence and stood around the empty field in the town where Mormons believed the great temple would someday stand. Everyone seemed cranky and underslept. A virus had broken out inside the bus, recirculating through the ducts and ventilators, and every other person had caught the flu.

Even Elder Tinsdale had fallen ill. As he lectured us about the temple he shifted a cough drop around inside his mouth, and some of his words were hard to understand.

"The summons to build might come soon. Tomorrow, perhaps. Some of you kids might even join the effort. Imagine the thrill of wielding spade and chisel with Jesus as your foreman. What a feeling."

I gazed around at the dirt and rocks and weeds, at the restaurant and parking garage across the street, at the cars and trucks and traffic lights, but I



B. Smaller

"I'm rich, you're thin. Together, we're perfect."

couldn't picture the spires and buttresses Elder Tinsdale was describing.

As usual, Orrin gave me the straight dope. "The Mormons don't even own the temple lot. Another religion does. Pretty ironic, don't you think?" he said.

"I'm tired of thinking. I'm trying faith."

"In what? A bunch of fairy tales?"

"In some of them."

On the long ride home the seating system collapsed. People sat down wherever they wanted to and tended to their colds with wads of tissues. Elder Tinsdale, exhausted, fell asleep and didn't wake to eat the boxed Whopper that Sister Helms set kindly on his lap. At sundown the driver dimmed the overhead lights and someone put on the Osmonds' greatest hits. I walked to the back, where Opal was sitting alone, the Book of Mormon open on her knee. She slid over to make room.

"I caught the bug," she said as I sat down.

I shrugged.

"It's fine if you're mad at me," she said.

"I'm just run down."

"That's the bug."

"It's not the bug," I said.

The Osmonds tape played as we crossed a long steel bridge back into Illinois. It felt odd to be leaving the Holy Land so suddenly, not knowing when, if ever, I'd be back. I let my eyes close as Opal told me stories about the part of her family that lived in Utah. "I've been thinking about my grandpa. He had four wives. He lived in the desert—big tall man, with a beard. I visited him with my mom when I was nine. His fourth wife, June, was nursing a baby—my uncle. I watched my own uncle breast-feed. That must seem weird to you."

"What?" I said. "I'm sorry. I'm not all here tonight."

"Those pills you take."

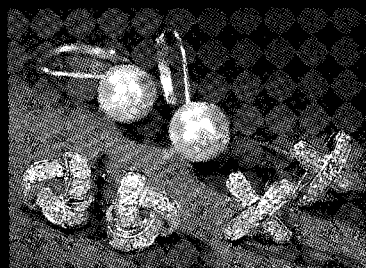
I shook my head. "I quit them."

"Why?"

"I don't know. They were in the way of something."

The tape switched sides. The bus was dark and cold. Opal put away her Book of Mormon and I fetched a blanket from the overhead rack. We kicked off our shoes and huddled closer together and spread the thin blue blanket across our laps. Beneath it our hands moved, quietly, like spirits. ♦

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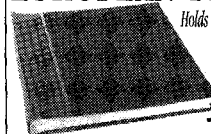
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BOOKS

I, SPY

The curious career of East Germany's Markus Wolf.

BY ROBERT HARRIS

GENERAL MARKUS WOLF was what is popularly known as a "spymaster." Indeed, he may well have been the greatest spymaster of modern times. In 1951, aged twenty-eight, he was one of twelve men who gathered in the southeastern Berlin suburb of Bohnsdorf to found the Main Intelligence Directorate—*die Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, or H.V.A.—of the German Democratic Republic. At twenty-nine, on the personal orders of Walter Ulbricht, the hard-line East German leader, he was made its head. At sixty-three, after more than three decades in office—an unprecedented span for an intelligence chief anywhere in the world—he retired. By then, the H.V.A. had three thousand employees, and Wolf himself was a shadowy dark star in the Western media: the cynical puppet master whose unerring hand was detected behind a score of embarrassing spy scandals.

If anything, the collapse of East Germany served only to heighten Wolf's fame. The so-called man without a face (as the tabloids dubbed him, after years of failing to obtain his photograph) turned out to have a very interesting face—the face, in fact, of an aging movie star. Not only that: he had a young wife (his third) and had published a well-regarded book about Russian cookery. Little wonder that amid the drab gray ranks of the former Communist leadership Wolf stood out. Little wonder, either, that he quickly became one of the chief scapegoats for the whole regime.

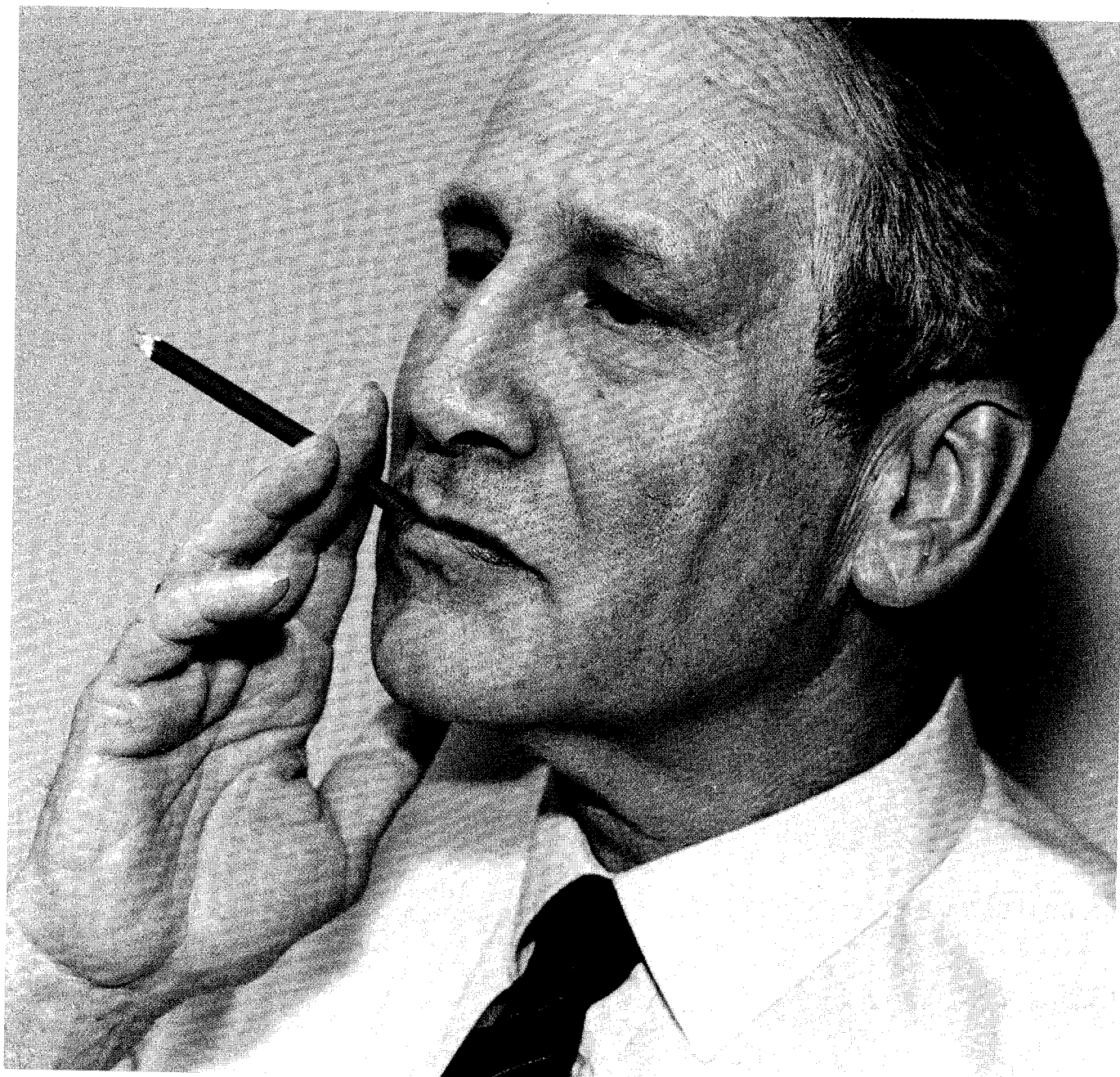
In 1993, at the age of seventy, Wolf was hauled out of retirement in the newly reunified Germany and put on trial for treason—a blatant example of victor's justice, as Wolf quite fairly points out, for how could he be guilty of treason against a state of which he was not even a citizen? That particular conviction was over-

turned on appeal, but his old enemies have never given up their quest for vengeance, and last week they seemed finally to have secured it when a court in Düsseldorf found him guilty of four kidnappings organized by the H.V.A. in the nineteen-fifties and sixties.

As usual, however, Wolf appears to have had the last laugh. He was let off with a suspended sentence of two years. And it could not have come at a better time, coinciding as it does with the publication—in no fewer than eleven languages—of Wolf's memoirs, so bringing him the sort of free publicity most publishers can only dream about.

"Man Without a Face" (Times Books; \$25) is a curious autobiography—defiant, apologetic, bitter, funny, sordid, boastful, sad. It is also unexpectedly well written and, mostly, entertaining—qualities for which, presumably, some of the credit must go to the London-based journalist Anne McElvoy, who has acted as Wolf's literary collaborator. It has something in common (although Wolf will loathe the comparison) with the memoirs of Walter Schellenberg, the cynical and brilliant young Nazi careerist who became head of the German intelligence service when he was only thirty-four. There is the same delight in the great game of espionage, the same malevolent eye for human weakness, the same creeping sense of despair at finding oneself on the wrong side of history.

Wolf was born in 1923, in Hechingen, a small town in the Catholic southwest of Germany. His father was a Jewish Communist fitness fanatic and the author of a best-selling book on homeopathy ("Nature as Healer and Helper"). He was also, like the fathers of so many sons who subsequently make their careers in espionage, a philanderer. The Wolfs fled to Moscow when Markus was eleven, and the boy was brought



"If I go down in espionage history, it may well be for perfecting the use of sex in spying," Wolf observes modestly.

up, in effect, as a Russian. He thus experienced the Stalin terror in full spate. "More and more of our friends and acquaintances in the German community had disappeared and my parents could no longer hide their anguish," he writes. Somehow, they survived. During the war, the young Wolf was sent to a Comintern school in the remote republic of Bashkiria, from which he emerged as a fanatical Stalinist cadre, trained in the use of explosives, submachine guns, rifles, pistols, hand grenades, political propaganda, and "conspiratorial techniques." In 1945, he was shipped back to the Soviet sector of Germany

and—the phrase does not seem inappropriate—turned loose upon his defeated compatriots.

Wolf was fashioned both by man and by nature to be a spy. For such a creature, there was no better habitat on earth than the divided Germany of the postwar years. His own estimate is that there were "as many as eighty secret service agencies" operating in Berlin alone. He loved the work. Even as head of the H.V.A., burdened by administration, he insisted "on running ten or twelve agents personally," he recalls. "As far as I know I was the only chief of any of the world's principal intelligence

agencies to do so." This entailed safe houses, false names, disguises, dead-letter drops, forged papers, car chases, forest rendezvous, and all the other tricks of a thousand airport thrillers.

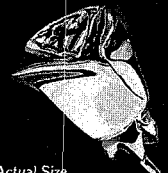
Some parts of the book seem frank enough, their authenticity buttressed by copious dates and even by extracts from what Wolf insists is a diary he kept during his heyday as a spy. Other sections are more coy. On the matter of whether the H.V.A. carried out assassinations (or "wet jobs," in the jargon of the trade), Wolf carefully says only that "to the best of my knowledge, neither the East nor the West German service ever arranged

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for anyone to be killed." Besides, he argues, murdering traitors is "a sign of weakness . . . a primitive and unproductive solution" compared with the delightful prospect of blackmailing them into working for you. Wet jobs were a vulgarity best left to the Bulgarians.

He is similarly discreet about the use of torture. Of the nineteen-fifties, he writes merely that "interrogation was the roughest department within the ministry, and I would not have liked to be exposed to some of the thugs who worked there" (one of whom was found to have an S.S. tattoo on his arm). And while he is ready to acknowledge the links between East Germany and the various terrorist groups it succored, trained, and armed—most notably the P.L.O.—he is conveniently vague on specifics: "I was excluded from important operational details."

Wolf is on safer ground when he writes about what became known as "Romeo spies." A Romeo spy was usually an East German male sent across the border to the West with false papers. (In one of the book's many inadvertently chilling sentences, Wolf notes, "We had the advantage of being able, for example, to use the identities of people killed in the Dresden bombings." The *advantage*?) These agents, exploiting the postwar shortage of eligible German men, then set about seducing female secretaries of a certain age whose work gave them access to classified material. Typical of those enmeshed in Wolf's schemes was Dagmar Kahlig-Scheffler, code-named Inge, who went to work in the office of the West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in the mid-seventies and passed on details of the tension between Bonn and Washington.

"If I go down in espionage history, it may well be for perfecting the use of sex in spying," Wolf observes modestly. A less friendly verdict might be that he will go down as one of the greatest pimps of all time. He set up brothels (known behind the Berlin Wall, apparently, as "raspberries") in which to trap gullible Westerners. He procured wives and mistresses for his most loyal agents. He also arranged for females who "were not prostitutes but down-to-earth women, Party members and loyal to their country" to have sex with defectors to the

East "in return for some expression of what we used to call the gratitude of the state, which turned out to be a preferential flat or an advance up the waiting list for a car."

This is one of several moments in "Man Without a Face" when the reader doesn't know whether to smile or to weep. To be willing to sell yourself for the actual ownership of some stinking, clattering Trabant would be sad enough. But to be willing to sell yourself for the mere promise of moving up the *waiting list* says more about the inherent feebleness of the East German regime than a shelf of Western Cold War propaganda.

It is this admission—here implicit, elsewhere explicit—that Wolf's career was ultimately worthless which gives these memoirs their peculiar, bitter-sweet flavor. His career was worthless because the cause to which it was dedicated was in itself hopeless—a fact that Wolf was too clever not to have become aware of. For example, almost all of East Germany's computer technology had to be stolen from the West—often by Wolf's agents. This piracy eventually meant that Robotron, East Germany's "top microelectronics company," was, according to Wolf, so dependent on I.B.M. that "it was, in effect, a sort of illegal subsidiary."

Nothing that Wolf's cunning might devise—no amount of raspberries and Romeos—could, in the end, compensate for East Germany's weakness. It is startling, even at this distance from the fall of the Berlin Wall, to discover that, on Wolf's reckoning, East Germany's "most lucrative source of hard currency" was the secret sale of its own citizens: between 1964 and 1990, thirty-three thousand political prisoners were released and a total of two hundred and fifteen thousand people allowed to emigrate in return for Western payments of 3.4 billion Deutsche marks.

But Wolf's career was worthless for a reason that went beyond the obvious one of the ultimate economic and moral failure of Communism. His long book is a testament to the essential uselessness of almost all espionage, in whatever cause. True, some rare spies do have a temporary effect on the balance of power: Klaus Fuchs, who passed the West's atomic secrets to the Soviets, may have hastened

the building of Russia's A-bomb by a couple of years. But most of the sad and farcical figures who troop through these pages—the lovelorn secretaries, the blackmailed ex-Nazis, the opportunists and the ideologues—made not a day's difference to the duration of the Communist bloc. Much of what they passed on could have been gleaned from an intelligent reading of the morning press. Wolf hardly needed Fräulein Kahlig-Scheffler to tell him that Schmidt and Jimmy Carter didn't get on. He could have got it from *Die Zeit*.

As for Wolf's most famous spy—Günter Guillaume, a top aide to the West German Chancellor Willy Brandt—he proved, as his controller grimly acknowledges, one of the greatest “own goals” in espionage history. Guillaume's material, like Kahlig-Scheffler's, was

essentially high-grade tittle-tattle. But when Guillaume was exposed the scandal destroyed Brandt and so removed from the Bonn Chancellery one of the few Western leaders who had any sympathy for East Germany. And it was Brandt's replacement, Helmut Schmidt, who requested the deployment of the United States Cruise and Pershing missiles on German soil—arguably the most grievous blow that East Germany's foreign policy ever suffered.

“If this account of my life has demonstrated anything,” Wolf concludes, “it is the limits of what intelligence can accomplish.” He seems to regret it. The rest of us, however—especially after contemplating the life of this dangerous, amusing, but ultimately deeply amoral “spymaster”—are more likely to offer up a silent prayer of thanks. ♦

IN ARCADIA EGO

What's happening to video games?

BY JOHN SEABROOK

I DISCOVERED video games at a mall on Route 1 in the middle of New Jersey in 1977, and for most of the next year I couldn't think of anything I wanted to do more than hang out in the arcade and feed quarters into those machines. All it took was for my friend Doug to say “Vaaaders”—short for Space Invaders—and we were there. In the



J. C. Herz

board games I grew up playing—Battleship, Risk, and the Avalon Hill war games—you'd move counters representing your armies around the board, but in these new games you were at risk. You identified with the spaceship in Space Invaders, or with the little triangle in Asteroids, in a way that you never identified with the colored cubes in Risk or with the ball in pinball. And in the game Missile Command it was up to you per-

sonally to save the world. As J. C. Herz writes in “Joystick Nation” (Little, Brown; \$23.95), “The most intense thing about Missile Command was this weird crazy moment near the end, when the ICBMs were raining down and you knew you were just about to lose it, that was totally euphoric. . . . You're gonna die at this instant. You're

dying. You're dead. And then you get to watch all the pretty explosions.”

Herz, a twenty-five-year-old woman from Texas, whose first book, “Surfing on the Internet,” nicely captured the strange dislocation of the on-line experience, writes as a “vid kid” herself. She, too, spent countless quarters in arcades. Herz is not particularly worried about the violence or the mindlessness of the games, pointing out that a youth mis-

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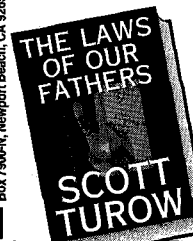
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spent playing video games actually prepares you very well for employment in what she calls the modern "military-entertainment complex." These days, almost anything can become a video game: movies, sports, comic books. And smart video games are invaluable training for today's smart wars. The Battle of Baghdad was won on the play stations of Sega. Herz writes:

Every tank driver in Kuwait had been trained in a virtual reality pod, and once the Gulf War was under way, many of its armored skirmishes were considerably shorter than a typical after-school session of Donkey Kong Country. The Battle of 73 Easting, for example, which saw one U.S. tank troop decimate an entire Iraqi armored brigade with no American casualties, took less than twenty-three minutes. The army was so proud of this that later they took all the black boxes and satellite images and reconstructed the whole engagement, second for second, as a high-resolution 3D videogame, so that now, tank driver trainees at Fort Knox can clamber into soundproofed SIMNET cockpits and play the battle again.

Herz admirably resists the temptation to McLuhanize about virtual reality, space, and time, and what it all means. For the most part, "Joystick Nation" is an amused but nonjudgmental book of reportage about the video-game industry. We hang out with young digital migrant workers in the windowless bowels of gaming companies and learn how they create the visual environment of the games—by building 3-D models out of computer structures called polygons and then gilding 2-D surfaces onto those models. We meet Eugene Jarvis, the man who programmed Defender and, like many of the older game designers in the book, misses the classic video games of the late seventies and early eighties. We hear Jonathan Rheingold, the associate publisher of the video-game magazine *Flux*, explain his system for rating games: If something really rocks, "we have a TV dog, where the dog is humping the TV, like, yes yes, oh yes, more yes." For something not quite so thrilling, "we have the licking dog," Rheingold says. "That's like, it's a satisfying experience, you'll get off on it."

WHERE Herz does find fault with video games is in the decline of fun. Pong, the ur-video game, was technically crude, but it captured the imag-

ination in a way that Die Hard does not. The improving computer technology has allowed game-makers to create ever more realistic environments on the screen, and consequently video games have become more focussed on narrative, simulation, and action—generally fighting, whether with guns or with fists—and less concerned with the actual gaming. Just as so many new movies are hollow vehicles for gee-whiz special effects at the expense of character and plot, so video games have been hurt by superior computer graphics and polygonal modelling, which stress production values at the expense of strategy and design.

Or so it seems to anyone over fifteen. (One of the side effects of rapid technological change is that you can now become an old fart younger than ever.) Herz also strikes an elegiac note for the vanished video arcade. She traces the beginning of its decline to the reintroduction, in the nineteen-eighties, of Skee-Ball (in which the player rolls wooden balls up a ramp and tries to drop them into the center hole) and of those cloyingly wholesome crane machines. "Awash in pink bunnies and nylon froggy puppets, the arcade quickly lost its cachet for dissipated adolescents," Herz writes. "The Skee-Ball machine was no place for any self-respecting teenager to strike a pose—it's kind of hard to be dangerous and cool when your five-year-old sister is lobbing Nerf balls twenty steps away." The trend toward making all entertainment safe for kids has reached the point where the only disreputable hangout left is the Internet—though not for long, if the government has its way.

Last week, I walked over to Times Square in search of an arcade where I could play a few video games. Years ago, I'd spent many pleasant hours in these dark, slightly threatening places, among hormonal fifteen-year-old Heavy Metal enthusiasts, crazed businessmen on their lunch hour, and various scary-looking characters. Only one of the old Times Square video arcades is left, at Broadway and Forty-seventh, and it seems much smaller than it used to be. The place was packed with Tekken, Virtua Fighter, and lots of games I had never heard of. Amid the din of fists splatting into faces,

spinal cords being ripped out, and asses being kicked, I heard the quaint "wakka wakka" sound of Pac-Man, the only game that I knew how to play in the whole place. Squeezing through the crowd and looking over people's shoulders, I noticed a guy who was following me with his eyes, his hands still working the game, his face blanker than the faces of the warriors on the screen.

The violence of the new generation of games didn't bother me (actually, I enjoy ripping out my vanquished opponent's spinal cord), but I was thrown off by the shift in point of view. As Douglas Rushkoff notes in his recent book "Playing the Future," the point of view in video games has evolved over the years from the overhead, omniscient one of Space Invaders and Asteroids to the first-person, in-your-face one of Virtua Cop and Doom. Also, the iconic simplicity of the early video-game figures—the blob in Pac-Man, let's say—made it easier for you to imagine yourself in the games. Ironically, the realism of the human figures in the new games makes them less compelling: it's obviously someone else up there on the screen, not you.

After performing ineptly in a game of Ultimate Mortal Kombat, to the disgust of a ten-year-old who was watching me—clearly, quarters are wasted on the wrong people—I walked five blocks down Broadway and went into the new virtual-reality emporium, XS New York: Too Much Is Not Enough. It's a vast space filled with sophisticated machines that simulate skiing, driving, flying, and various extreme sports. Here there was more realism still. Technicians in black outfits were standing around, ready to help you into the equipment: you don't so much play these games as wear them. There weren't many customers, and the ones who were there didn't seem to be having much fun.

Perhaps too much is enough. What has been lost is the chance to dream, to imagine yourself in the action. "Nowadays, there's no imagination required, the realism is so advanced," one video-game aficionado in Herz's book says. Where will it all end? The way things are going, one of these days some vid kid is going to do something radical—maybe pick up a racquet and say, "Like, let's go play tennis." ♦

PUT ON THE DOG

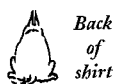
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BRIEFLY NOTED

EVE'S APPLE, by Jonathan Rosen (Random House; \$24). Rosen's impressive debut is both a contemporary turn on Kafka's "Hunger Artist" and a highly original addition to the distinguished line of Jewish-American family romances. Joseph's lover, Ruth, is an anorexic; Joseph becomes obsessed with uncovering the roots of her self-denial and, in doing so, discovers a hole in his own soul. The novel includes several hilarious scenes, not least a luncheon at the Harvard Club during which a wise therapist with a keen appetite suddenly leads our hero to recognize his own roiling meshugaas.

VIRGINIA WOOLF, by Hermione Lee (Knopf; \$39.95). Any new biographer of Woolf has to contend with substantial obstacles: a mountain of material; numerous theses that have frozen Woolf into an icon of Mad Genius, Abuse Victim, or Bloomsbury Snob; and, most daunting of all, her own fierce battle against conventional narrative form. Lee's superb book overcomes all of them with one brilliant stroke, worthy of its subject. She organizes Woolf's life into essaylike chapters—"Biography," "Houses," "Abuses," "Madness"—thereby juxtaposing sophisticated speculation with meticulous research, and the resulting palimpsest of disparate feelings and complex social and physical detail reawakens the pulse-racing experience of reading "Mrs. Dalloway" for the first time.

TAKEOFF, by Daniele del Giudice, translated from the Italian by Joseph Farrell (Harcourt Brace; \$20). "In flight," this Italian novelist writes, "even those who make every effort to bring out the worst in themselves find themselves implacably condemned to a certain nobility of spirit." This is a wonderful book about the implacable condemnation of loving to fly—an account of "a pile of metal transforming itself into an airplane by the power of the air itself." It is also an ode to fear, which the author says "is composed of liquids in the act of drying up."

EVERY SECRET THING: MY FAMILY, MY COUNTRY, by Gillian Slovo (Little, Brown; \$24.95). This novelist's memoir explores the tensions between political commitment and personal responsibility, and it is striking for its passionate ambivalence. Ruth First and Joe Slovo were white South African Communists who chose to run the risks of fighting apartheid: they were often in hiding, in jail, or in exile, and therefore separated from their three daughters. Here Gillian, the middle daughter, recalls her guilt for wishing that the claims of family could compete with the Cause. Her father lived long enough to serve in the Mandela Cabinet, but a letter bomb sent by South African security forces killed her mother in 1982.

LADYFINGERS & NUN'S TUMMIES, by Martha Barnette (Times; \$20). There is nothing in this book that we absolutely need to know, yet everything in it is delightful to learn. What Barnette calls her "etymological romps" take us through languages and across millennia in a charming style that, starting with words describing things we eat, turns out to offer endless food for thought.



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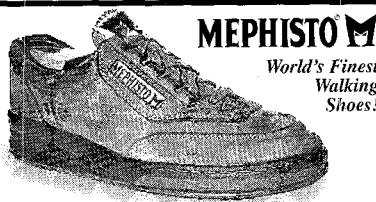
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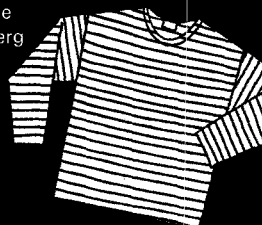
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THE ART WORLD



A QUESTION OF HUMAN PRESENCE

The still-life as a study in the gains and losses of a century of modern art.

BY CALVIN TOMKINS

SINCE its invention as an independent art form in the seventeenth century, still-life painting has had any number of masters, both major and minor, but not until our century did it become a central conduit for new pictorial ideas. That, at any rate, is the premise of "Objects of Desire: The Modern Still Life," the fascinating and rather chilling exhibition that opened last week at the Museum of Modern Art. (Organized and selected by Margit Rowell, the chief curator of MOMA's Department of Drawings, it will be on view through August 26th.) Exhibitions that purport to sum up or synthesize or refract the hundred-plus-year life span of modern art are on every museum's agenda these days, as the millennium draws nigh, but it will be hard to find one whose focus is as clear as this one, or whose premise holds up as well.

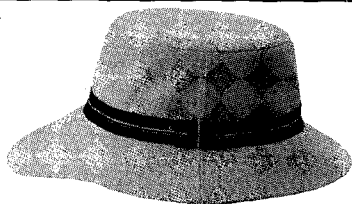
Considered a minor genre for most of its four-hundred-year history, a quiet and undemanding poor relation to history painting, portraits, and landscapes, still-life took center stage in the first decade of the twentieth century as the vehicle for a new conception of art. No other form lent itself so naturally to an art whose goal was to be real in itself, rather than a reflection or a representation of some external reality. In a sense, still-life had always been real in itself: not something found or perceived in nature but *nature morte*, as the French said—a composition of inanimate objects arbitrarily chosen and arranged by the artist. Far more easily than a portrait, a nude, or a landscape, a still-life could be anything the artist wanted it to be. Thus Picasso and Braque manipulated and distorted bottles, wineglasses, pipes, fragments of newspaper, and other café-table objects to serve their revolutionary concept of Cubist space, in which an object is seen simultaneously

from several different points of view. Matisse could create his own ambiguous, flattened space by setting a green flask, a brown coffeepot, and a bowl of apples adrift in a turbulent sea of allover decorative patterning, as he did in the 1908-09 "Still Life with Blue Tablecloth," which is one of the high points of the MOMA exhibition. Duchamp, Picabia, and the Dadaists parodied the whole notion of still-life's "domestic" scale with their aggressive, machine-age objects and images, while Giorgio de Chirico, anticipating Surrealism, took still-life "off the table," as Rowell writes in her catalogue essay, "out of the interior, and into the infinite spaces of the world."

Rowell has kept the focus on artists who extend or subvert the traditional definition of still-life. "What I've tried to do in this exhibition is to show how certain artists went to the edge . . . to the absolute limit of what a still-life could be," she told me. Some of her inclusions and exclusions are bound to be questioned. The Guerrilla Girls have already plastered SoHo with posters pointing out the small number of women in the show—only five, out of seventy artists represented. Rowell says that she couldn't get the particular Georgia O'Keeffe painting she wanted, and that very few women artists have worked close enough to the edge to meet her requirements. "It's interesting," she said. "Norman Bryson points out that in the Flemish period still-life was considered women's work, because it was very detailed, and about flowers and domesticity, but even then most of the still-life paintings were done by men." Her decision to include sculpture as well as painting—from Picasso's sheet-metal-and-wire "Guitar" (1912-13) to Robert Gober's giant-sized box of tissues with a drainpipe running through it



Legitimate objects of desire: Matisse's 1916 "Apples."



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("Untitled," 1994-95)—reflects the progressive erosion of barriers between aesthetic categories, but also makes it seem at times that the premise may have been stretched too far. A still-life is a "fiction," as Rowell writes in the exhibition catalogue—an image that has been removed from the reality that inspired it and transported to another plane. But does this really apply in the case of Andy Warhol's "Brillo Boxes," a number of which are also in the show? It seems to me that there is almost no visible distance between these objects and their commercial antecedents; if you saw a stack of them on the sidewalk, you might think that they were headed for D'Agostino.

By stretching the premise, though, the show manages to cover nearly all the significant developments in modern art: Cubism, Dada and Surrealism, Expressionism, Abstraction, Assemblage, Pop, Minimalism and Conceptualism, and what Rowell calls "Postmodern Simulacra." As you move through the chronological sequence, it is more than a little unsettling to see what has happened to objects in the modern still-life. The elements of dehumanization that appear in Duchamp's and Picabia's machine images (where they were leavened by humor) become more and more pronounced in the years following the First World War. Miro's "Still Life II (The Carbide Lamp)," Léger's "Composition with Two Typewriters," and even Gerald Murphy's "Razor," with its larger-than-life matchbox, safety razor, and fountain pen, are pictures without human presence, where objects take on a life of their own. In Magritte's paintings, the domestic objects have grown to huge and menacing scale, and the green apple in his "The Listening Room" fills the room from wall to wall and from floor to ceiling.

By the late fifties, Rauschenberg was making combine-paintings out of street trash and stuffed birds, and Johns was painting his flags, targets, and numbers. There is a good deal of human presence in these works, oddly enough, but less and less of it in the Pop, Minimal, and Conceptual works that came later. From 1960 on, the objects in advanced art mostly reflect the irony, ambiguity, and deadpan anomie that have come to be

regarded as hallmarks of the postmodern experience. These are pretty depressing hallmarks, and they make you think about the title of Rowell's show. Objects of desire? The objects that an artist chooses to present or to represent in a still-life have a "power of seduction," according to Rowell, which to some degree reflects the desires of society at large. They seduce us for different reasons—because they are beautiful, or familiar, or exotic, or new—and the desire they evoke can be equally varied (domestic desire, consumer desire, masculine or feminine desire). This definition certainly fits the pre-1960 pieces in this exhibition, which include such ravishing works as Matisse's "Apples" (1916), Mondrian's "Still Life with Ginger Pot II" (1912), and Picasso's astonishing "Still Life with Skull, Leeks, and Pitcher" (1945). In the last part of the show, however, desire is frequently replaced by something like its opposite. The seductive power of Cindy Sherman's 1987 "Untitled #172," a color photograph of a banquet table on which spilled food and candle wax serve as backdrop for a plateful of fat, glistening earthworms (night crawlers, if I'm not mistaken), suggests desire turned inside out: seduction by disgust.

The last work in the show, Wolfgang Laib's "Milkstone" (1988), is a rectangular slab of white marble whose top surface has been hollowed just enough to hold a thin film of milk. The slab is on the floor, in a small chamber of its own, and because the milk is the same shade of white as the marble you wouldn't know it was there unless you read the wall label. (It has to be replaced every twenty-four hours, to keep it from turning sour.) This austere beautiful object—more beautiful in the mind than in the eye—sends out unmistakable echoes of the traditional still-life. Quiet, meditative, a perfect balance of organic and inorganic, and above all *stilled*, it seduces the viewer with the purity of its emptiness. But the message from the floor is not very cheering. An exhibition that opens with Cézanne's great "Still Life with a Ginger Jar and Eggplants" and closes with Laib's "Milkstone" can hardly fail to suggest how much has been lost to art in the last hundred years, and to leave us wondering, as we all do now and then, whether the gains will ever prove to have been worth it. ♦

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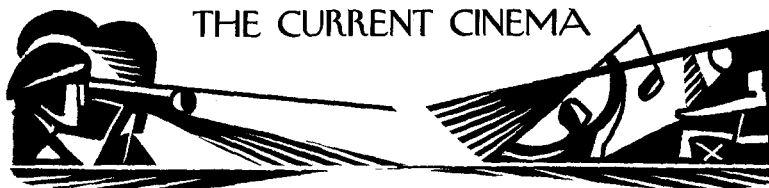
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WINGING IT

"Con Air" is a turbulent ride.

BY ANTHONY LANE

ADVANCE word on "Con Air" said that it was all about an airplane with an unusually dangerous and potentially lethal load. Big deal. You should try the lunches they serve out of Newark. Compared with the chicken

accent on evil; and Diamond Dog (Ving Rhames), black-liberation terrorist. Together with the odd rapist and drug baron, these boys are being flown to a new, high-security prison, "designed to warehouse the worst of the worst."



Nicolas Cage, on a valiant quest for irony in a world of action.

napalm I ate on my last flight, the men in "Con Air" are about as harmful as balloons. Still, if you are determined to enjoy this picture you may as well make the effort to believe in its inhabitants, so here goes. On board the plane, in the care of the United States Marshals Service, is Cameron Poe (Nicolas Cage), a former Army Ranger—"With your military skills, you are a deadly weapon"—who is hitching a ride home to his wife and child after serving eight years for killing some punk by mistake. During his time in prison, Poe took care to educate himself, learning, among other things, to speak Spanish and to practice origami. He is, we are told, "a nobody," but the rest of the passenger list is stuffed with somebodies. There is Cyrus Gissom (John Malkovich), evil genius, with the accent on genius; Garland Greene (Steve Buscemi), evil genius, with the

You always know that a movie is in trouble when half the dramatis personae are required to waste their time beefing up the reputations of the other half. "All those monsters on one plane!" a woman at ground control says. "They somehow managed to get every crook and freak in the universe on one plane," Poe says. "Makes the Manson family look like the Partridge Family," says a convict friend of Poe's. What the screenwriter, Scott Rosenberg, and the director, Simon West, fail to understand is that the more blatantly they broadcast such wickedness the less we believe in it: everyone talks with such awe about Garland Greene, about his extravagant appetite for homicide, that you can't help laughing when his restraining mask is finally unstrapped to reveal the endearing bozo features of Steve Buscemi—a man who could, if he was feeling especially mean, kill a couple

TAKESHI YADATSU

of cold beers. The mask, of course, is a steal from "The Silence of the Lambs," as is the sobriquet of Grissom—Cyrus the Virus. Oh, please. Jonathan Demme makes a respectable and coherent thriller, and six years later Hollywood screenwriters are still looting it for ideas. Couldn't they, you know, have some new ones?

Needless to say, the villains break loose, with the aid of some painfully concealed straight pins. From here on, their task is simple: land at Carson City, dump the low-grade prisoners, pick up a fresh batch of hard cases, fly to a deserted airstrip, switch planes, then leave American airspace and spend the rest of their lives doing raffia work, or whatever retired psychos do. Only Poe can foil their plans; with his origami training, for example, he is capable of pecking Diamond Dog to death with a small paper goose. Anyway, he and the rest of the cons reach Carson City in the middle of a sandstorm—"Perfect," says Cyrus, who is able to leave the plane in a protective hood and so pass for a guard. But what would have happened without the sandstorm? How was the master criminal going to disguise himself on a nice calm day? I'm not saying that "Con Air" should be realistic—a certain hokey implausibility comes with the territory—but a little touch of logic in the distribution of lucky breaks and bad calls would not have gone amiss. As it is, the picture runs mostly on atmospheric, or at least acoustic, principles: the sole criterion governing the Carson City scene appears to be the director's profound desire to play with his wind machines, and anyone approaching from a distance is automatically filmed in long shot through a wobbly heat haze. In the closing minutes, all motives are jettisoned in favor of *Sturm und Drang*: with the plane forced to make an emergency landing, the choice of runway is quickly whittled down to either (a) the Las Vegas strip or (b) the Las Vegas strip. Jackpot guaranteed.

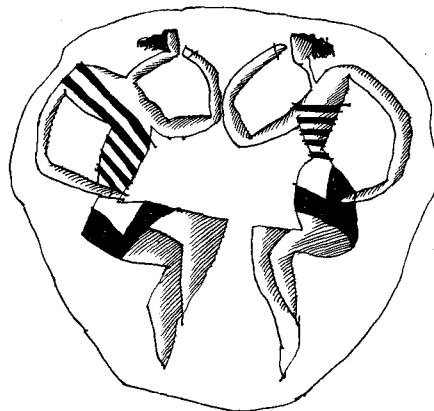
All this is a way of saying that "Con Air" was produced by Jerry Bruckheimer. With his late partner, Don Simpson, Bruckheimer was responsible for "Top Gun," "Beverly Hills Cop," "Crimson Tide," and a host of other quiet, Bergmanish delvings into the agon of a godless world. To watch those movies was to have your brains tossed like salad, but anyone who claimed to be wholly impervious to the bright

crunch of the Bruckheimer style was either lying or dead. I would be more than happy to welcome "Con Air" into the fold, but it is not one of Bruckheimer's best. There's a great moment when the airborne Poe sends a message to the authorities by scrawling it on a dead body and mailing it into thin air, but the rest of the film rarely risks the blackness of such comedy. Unlike "Top Gun," it doesn't quite have the courage of its own cheesiness, although the Wagnerian leitmotiv of the toy bunny that runs, or hops, through the entire plot, culminating in a slightly damp appearance at the climax, should bring comfort and joy to cynics everywhere. Simon West is making his directorial debut here; like Tony Scott, a Bruckheimer regular, he is an Englishman who found success in advertising. As the publicity notes remind us, "His Pepsi Inertube spot was voted the most popular commercial of the 1995 Superbowl in a *USA Today* poll." Scholars of the West oeuvre argue that this early work is still his best—that, if anything, he has had trouble moving on. "Con Air" failed to touch my inner tube, but by the end I was dying for a Pepsi.

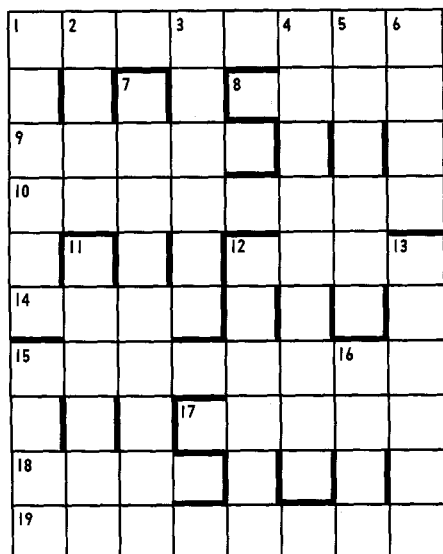
A few days later, I found myself watching "Spartacus"—the only Kubrick film that I really like, with the cold pedantry of his manner properly offset by all that sweat and sand. In particular, I watched a brief scene in which a quartet of slaves walk toward an arena in which half of them will die; Kirk Douglas is given no special treatment by the camera—he is just part of the lineup, the idea being that the ensuing scenes will thrust our hero, through force of arms and of will, onto center stage. Compare the villains arriving at the plane in "Con Air," and you see how crassly West's camera picks out each figure and goggles at it; how brutishness is indicated by a slow-

motion closeup of a pair of boots clomping like thunder against the ground. You could say that it's merely one overblown shot, but it does provoke the pessimistic thought that movies—perhaps under the influence of commercials—have woefully mislaid the virtues of unadorned storytelling. Where Kubrick established a steady, ominous rhythm from and against which violence would suddenly break, West choreographs the simplest motions as if they themselves were inherently violent. So swiftly, in other words, does he debase the currency of action that his thriller is all but spent before it has even begun. "Con Air" may look turbulent and aggressive, even rather seditious, but in truth West is a slave to the Bruckheimer ethic; and, unlike Kirk Douglas, he will never revolt.

In one respect, "Con Air" should be able to hold its head high. Kubrick hired not just Douglas but Laurence Olivier, Jean Simmons, and Peter Ustinov; West has Nicolas Cage, John Malkovich, Steve Buscemi, and, in the earthbound role of a heroically flustered marshal, John Cusack. How can you make a bad film with a cast like that? Well, it's a tall order, but somehow West pulls it off. I felt sorry for Malkovich, who normally tastes the pleasure of cruel lines as though with a forked tongue. Here he is faced with the saddest sound of all—dialogue that really, really tries to be tough, like a teen-ager who can't quite handle a drink. Cyrus to the pilot: "If you say a word about this on the radio, the next wings you see will belong to the flies buzzing over your rotting corpse." Whoo! Only Nicolas Cage, in fact, emerges intact from the rubble of this picture; he has managed to pass from light comedian to heavy action hero while maintaining the air of someone who finds existence to be one long, weary joke. "On any other day, that might seem strange," he murmurs as a silver Alfa Romeo flies through the sky on the end of a rope. What is truly brave about Poe is not that he stays on board and opts to fight Cyrus and his merry men but that he refuses to be impressed by the explosive superfluity of the proceedings. His is a valiant quest for irony in a movie that wants only to whack us into oblivion, and in his low-lidded eyes we see a reflection of our own ever-growing predicament: there is nothing so boring in life, let alone in cinema, as the boredom of being excited all the time. ♦



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ACROSS

- 1 Dagger lit from behind in fight (8)
- 8 American writer beginning to memorize sonnet (4)
- 9 Remain undecided following unsatisfactory tip (5)
- 10 Chances are a newspaper offers special delivery? (8)
- 12 Small and smooth (4)
- 14 Love to chatter about green light (4)
- 15 Pose as college grad, turning in place (8)
- 17 Wagon holds a small weight (5)
- 18 Ruined Sol Hurok's finale (4)
- 19 Broadcasting antihero in a new presentation (2,3,3)

DOWN

- 1 Wall covering crops is raised by company (6)
- 2 Announced brownish-gray drink (4)
- 3 Like negligee worn by one in France—utter foolishness (6)
- 4 Rent, to procure paintings (4,5)
- 5 Selena's music turned up on a plane (6)
- 6 Sign submarine captain up (4)
- 7 Examine word heard in church that's first part of the Bible (9)
- 11 Redesigned rinks around university where winter athletes can be found (3,3)
- 12 Single absorbing article: "Cold Comfort" (6)
- 13 Arrest involves one loser (6)
- 15 Indifferent operator after call for assistance (2-2)
- 16 Hack it up, holding chopping tool (4)

This week's puzzle is by Mike Shen. The solution to the preceding puzzle appears in this week's R.S.V.P. section. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solver's Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036.

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TIMES ROMAN FONT ANNOUNCES SHORTAGE OF PERIODS

BY STEVE MARTIN

REPRESENTATIVES of the popular Times Roman font recently announced a shortage of periods and have offered substitutes—such as inverted commas, exclamation marks, and semicolons—until the crisis is overcome by people such as yourself, who through creative management of surplus punctuation can perhaps allay the constant demand for periods, whose heavy usage in the last ten years (not only in English but in virtually every language in the world) is creating a burden on writers everywhere, thus generating a litany of comments, among them: “What the hell am I supposed to do without my periods? How am I going to write? Isn’t this a terrible disaster? Are they crazy? Won’t this just lead to misuse of other, less interesting punctuation???”

“Most vulnerable are writers who work in short, choppy sentences,” said a spokesperson for Times Roman, who continued, “We are trying to remedy the situation and have suggested alternatives, like umlauts, since we have plenty of umlauts—and, in fact, have more umlauts than we could possibly use in a lifetime! Don’t forget, umlauts can really spice up a page with their delicate symmetry—resting often midway in a word, letters spilling on either side—and not only indicate the pronunciation of a word but also contribute to a writer’s greater glory because they’re fancy, not to mention that they even look like periods, indeed, are indistinguishable from periods, and will lead casual readers to believe that the article actually contains periods!”

Bobby Brainard, a writer living in an isolated cabin in Montana—who is, in fact, the only writer living in an isolated cabin in Montana who is not insane—is

facing a dilemma typical of writers across the nation: “I have a sentence that has just got to be stopped; it is currently sixteen pages long and is edging out the front door and is now so lumbering I’m starting to worry that one period alone won’t be enough—that I’ll need at least two to finally kill it off—and if that doesn’t work, I’ve ordered an elephant gun from Jessie’s,



and if I don’t get some periods fast I’m going to have to use it . . .” The magazine *International Hebrew* has offered this emergency statement: “We currently have an oversupply of backwards periods and will be happy to send some to Mister Brainard or anyone else facing a crisis!” period backwards the in slip you while moment a for way other the look to sentence the getting is trick only The

The general concern of writers is summed up by this brief telegram:

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We must resolve it and stop the stop-
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Tom Stoppard

Needless to say, there has been an increasing pressure on the ellipsis . . .

“I assure you,” said the spokesperson, “I assure you the ellipsis is not—repeat,

is not—just three periods strung together, and, although certain writers have plundered the ellipsis for its dots, such dots are deeply inelegant and ineffective when used to stop a sentence! An ellipsis point is too weak to stop a modern sentence, which would require at least *two* ellipsis points, leaving the third dot to stand alone pointlessly—and, indeed, two periods at the end of a sentence would look like a typo, comprende? And why is Times Roman so important? Why can’t writers employ some of our other, lesser-used fonts, such as Goofy Deluxe, Namby Pamby Extra Narrow, or Gone Fishin’?”

In fact, there is movement toward alternate punctuation; consider the New Punctuation and Suicide Cult in Southern Texas, whose credo is “Why not try some new and different kinds of punctuation and then kill ourselves?” Notice how these knotty epigrams from Shakespeare are easily unravelled:

Every cloud engenders not a storm ☺

Horatio, I am dead ☺

Remembering the Albertus Extra Bold asterisk embargo of several years back, one hopes the crisis is solved quickly, because a life of exclamation marks, no matter how superficially exciting, is no life at all! There are, of course, many other fonts one could use if the crisis continues, but, frankly, which would you rather be faced with—Namby Pamby Extra Narrow or the bosomy sexuality of Times Roman? The shortage itself may be a useful one, provided it’s over quickly, for it has made at least this author appreciate and value his one spare period, and it is with great respect that I use it now. ♦

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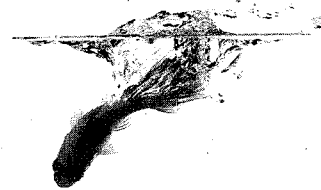


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